

A PRINCESS OF THE OLD WORLD



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MADemoisELLE ENTERING ORLÉANS

FROM THE PICTURE BY M. EUGÈNE FOULD IN THE SALON OF 1906

A PRINCESS OF THE OLD WORLD

BY
ELEANOR C. PRICE

"Duquel mariage est sortie la tres-belle, tres-excellente et tres-accomplie
Princesse Anne Marie Louise d'Orléans, qui possede en perfection les plus
rares qualitez qui parent un esprit, et qui font aymer un corps: c'est elle que
nous nommons ordinairement Mademoiselle, souhaitée des plus grands
Monarques, et aymée universellement de toute la terre."

WITH TWENTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THIS book is meant to be a true picture in more or less detail, drawn chiefly from contemporary memoirs, of French society in the seventeenth century, especially the society which is a natural background for the distinguished, eccentric personality of Anne Marie Louise d'Orléans, Duchesse de Montpensier, known in her own day and ours as La Grande Mademoiselle.

The life of Mademoiselle covers nearly three-quarters of the century. If the earlier part of this period has been more dwelt upon than the later, it is because people and manners in the final years of Louis XIII, under the Regency, and during the Wars of the Fronde, are less familiar to English readers than those belonging to the actual age of Louis XIV. It is also because Mademoiselle herself, picturesque, adventurous, original, loses much of her characteristic charm when she falls once and for ever under the baleful little shadow of Lauzun.

E. C. P.

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Corneille. G. Lanson. " " "

Madame de Sévigné. G. Boissier. " " "

Henry IV = Marie de Médicis.

King of
France;
b. 1553;
d. 1610.

Henry de Bourbon = Henriette
Catherine
de Joyeuse
(m. 2ndly
Charles,
Duke of
Guise).

Duke of Mont-
pensier.

Louis XIII = Anne of
Austria,
dau. of
Philip III
of Spain.

b. 1601;
d. 1643.

Elizabeth = Philip IV
of Spain.

Christine = Duke
of
Savoy.

Gaston, Duke of
Orléans
(Monsieur);
b. 1608;
d. 1660.

Marie de
Bourbon,
Duchess of
Mont-
pensier.
2nd. Mar-
guerite de
Lorraine.

Henriette-Marie = Charles I
of
England.

Anne Marie

Louise d'Orléans
(*La Grande Made-
moiselle*); b. 1627;
d. 1693.

Louis XIV = Marie Thérèse
of Austria.
b. 1638;
d. 1715.

Philippe = 1st. Henrietta-Anne
Duke of
Orleans. 2nd. Elizabeth-
Charlotte,
Princess-Palatine.

PART I
CHILDHOOD AND EARLY YEARS
1627-48

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CHAPTER I

1626-1635

“ And cymbals glorious
Swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets
Of Notre Dame.”

“ And the flare of the bonfires died down into the flickering
tapers that dimly lit the funerals.”

MADemoiselle ARRIVES—THE CHALAIS AFFAIR—THE MONTPEN-
SIER MARRIAGE—THE DEATH OF THE DUCHESS—MADemoiselle
IN HER NURSERY—LOUIS XIII.

ON the 29th of May, in the year 1627, the cannon of noisy Paris were thundering, the bells clanging and clashing, for the birth of a grandchild of France. The news ran through the narrow, crowded streets, where the citizens stopped to laugh and gossip till scattered aside by some great lady's plunging coach, some splendid courtier with his train of men-at-arms and lackeys, on the way to offer congratulations at the Louvre.

On the quays of the Seine, on the Pont Neuf, the new thoroughfare, not blocked by houses like the other bridges, where King Henry IV on horseback kept guard over “Paris, sa grand'-ville,” crowds gathered with their heads turned towards the palace, whose high roofs, stately and glittering in the May sunshine, sheltered the new baby and

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its mother. The crowds were pleased and good-tempered, though the desired prince had failed to arrive. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans had done her duty, and as quickly as possible. In the meanwhile, Paris took "Mademoiselle" to its light heart and capricious fancy.

The marriage of Monsieur, the King's brother, with Marie de Bourbon, Duchesse de Montpensier, the richest heiress in Europe, was one of the early triumphs of Richelieu. When he became First Minister, the kingdom of France was represented in Europe by two inglorious young men, Louis XIII and his heir presumptive, Gaston, Duc d'Anjou; and there was little hope of an heir apparent, the King having been married some years without children. French royalty seemed therefore at a low ebb, from a personal point of view. With regard to State affairs, the work of those two clever and practical men, Henry IV and Sully, as to the strengthening of the King's supremacy, the centralisation of France, the beginnings of her foreign and financial policy, the checking of a rampant nobility, had been largely undone, especially in the last matter, by the undisciplined, favourite-ridden years of Marie de Médicis' regency. The struggle for command at home and abroad was taken up by Richelieu, and carried on through great difficulties, as far as the princes and nobles were concerned. It seems doubtful whether the general advance in royal despotism and centralisation, accompanied by heavy taxes, was good for the people of France in the long run; but Richelieu, Mazarin, Louis XIV, saw no alternative except anarchy. In such a world of stormy rivalry, some one had to rule; they determined that the King should be the ruler.

At Mademoiselle's birth, the struggle was still proceeding; she lived on into a changed France, where revolts and conspiracies were things of the past, the *Roi Soleil* shining in all his glory.

In 1626, Cardinal de Richelieu had been First Minister for two years, and was not yet at the zenith of his power. Louis XIII was five-and-twenty, and of a character most

unattractive to the French, though they respected him as "Louis le Juste." He was brave and straightforward, a passionate sportsman, but reserved, shy, self-diffident, in manners and temperament the very opposite to his father, Henry IV. Of a gloomy disposition and indifferent health, a stammerer, easily bored, caring for no one on earth but the few young men who were his friends, he was a disagreeable and disappointing husband to Queen Anne, the proud and lovely Spaniard. Years before, she had been attracted by the young King's dark beauty, but now, long unloved, neglected, childless, the object of suspicions not all unjustified, there were few women more unhappy.

France wanted an heir, a royal child of her own, and this, even more than the King's little care for popularity, accounts for the rise of a party which set its hopes and affections on his brother Gaston, a handsome, pleasant, intelligent, weak, vicious boy of eighteen. Henry IV's youngest son, he was the spoilt favourite of his mother, Marie de Médicis; and she—a curious touch of the times—had provided him with a bad fairy godmother in the person of Marguerite de Valois, her husband's divorced wife. His name of Gaston had been borne by no prince since the famous young hero Gaston de Foix, Duc de Nemours, nephew of Louis XII. Not any heroic virtues, however, but rather the vices of the Valois, were bestowed on this new Gaston by his godmother.

As to an easy conscience and popular manners and morals, he was his father's son, and it was no difficult task to set him up, the heir presumptive, as a rival to his brother the King. Once married, and the father of kings to be, Monsieur would easily become the most powerful man in France. Several of the great nobles, who hated law and loved disorder, certain princes of the blood royal, each with his own ambition, and the wild crowd of general society, checked in its desperate race after adventure and amusement by the dull indifference of the King—all were ready to throw themselves into the new young Court of the future. No dulness with Monsieur: he was alive to the tips of his restless

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fingers, to the ends of his curling hair on which the feathered hat was perched jauntily. He was always whistling; he could not even stand still to have his coat buttoned. Sometimes he was like a real Prince Charming, friendly and delightful. No gloomy palace walls or damp forests for him: he must see life, must be amused, must go out among the people. His was a curious mind, constant to nothing and to nobody; at his worst, he was a mere flibbertigibbet of a prince, an irresponsible sprig of royalty.

For the good of France, and as a check on Henry, Prince de Condé, who considered himself next in the succession, Cardinal de Richelieu and the Queen-mother intended Monsieur to marry. Louis XIII, not without pangs, gave his consent; he had at least one of his father's royal virtues—loyalty, however unwilling, to a great minister; and also, to do him justice, never was there a king who identified himself more entirely with his kingdom.

Monsieur was ready to marry, but he and his friends had views of their own. They decided that he ought to marry a foreign princess: he would then, they thought, be more independent of his brother; and when the King died, an event neither unwished nor unexpected, he would have foreign allies as well as a strong party in France.

Richelieu's views differed from theirs. He intended Gaston, single or married, to remain the King's subject, and had already chosen Mademoiselle de Montpensier as his bride. This was a marriage which would bring about no cabals in the country, would in no way affect the King's power, and presented a thousand advantages. The young Princess was descended, through the Dukes of Montpensier, from the elder branch of the House of Bourbon, who traced their descent from Saint-Louis through Robert de Clermont, his sixth son. Marie de Bourbon, their one representative, besides being Duchess in her own right of Montpensier, Chatellerault, and Saint-Fargeau, was Sovereign Princess of Dombes and La Roche-sur-Yon, and possessed many other fine estates, marquisates, counties, baronies, as well as an



GASTON DE FRANCE, DUC D'ORLÉANS

immense fortune in funded property. It was a marriage which would give satisfaction to the great House of Lorraine, always to be reckoned with. Charles, Duc de Guise, was the second husband of Henriette de Joyeuse, Mademoiselle de Montpensier's mother.

The inner circle of Monsieur's friends, with his late governor, the Maréchal d'Ornano, at their head, and encouraged by the Duc de Vendôme and his brother the Grand Prior, sons of Henry IV by Gabrielle d'Estrées, went so far in conspiring against this marriage that they threatened the life of Richelieu. Of the several foolish young men who were concerned in this conspiracy, the unfortunate Comte de Chalais, Master of the Wardrobe to the King, was the most terribly punished. He had been drawn in by his passion for Madame de Chevreuse, the Queen's friend, who hated Richelieu on her own account, and was furiously opposed to a marriage which filled the childless Queen with jealous dread. The whole plot, with all its double intrigues and ramifications, even with accusations against the Queen herself, suggesting that the life of Louis was also threatened, and that after his death she intended to marry his brother, came to the Cardinal's knowledge by means of his spies, then and always legion. Monsieur was called upon to answer for himself. He confessed everything and betrayed everybody. Some charitable writers say that he lost his nerve; others, that with perfect coolness of head he made the best bargain possible for himself. His one excuse is that he was only a spoilt, ill-taught boy of eighteen. The Queen's indignant denials convinced Louis that she had been atrociously slandered. Richelieu probably knew this very well at the time. D'Ornano, the Vendôme Princes, and others were imprisoned; some of them died in prison. Madame de Chevreuse was exiled from the Court and then from France.

Jealousy of Chalais and the King's former affection for him, quite as much as a prudent fear of touching greater personages, seems to have been Richelieu's chief reason for

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making him the scapegoat of the whole affair. His head was chopped off at Nantes with circumstances of horrible cruelty. In the same city, a few days earlier, Monsieur had been hurriedly married to the unfortunate girl whom the Cardinal and the Queen-mother had chosen. Richelieu himself performed the ceremony.

As the price of his obedience in "ranging himself," Gaston became Duke of Orléans and of Chartres, and Count of Blois. His household almost equalled the King's in number and magnificence. He had a guard of eighty men in his livery, and four-and-twenty Suisses who marched before him, *tambour battant*, on Sundays and holy days. He and his wife had their apartments at the Louvre, where, in the intervals of court ballets, comedies, and hunting parties, during that winter of uncertain hopes and fears, courtiers hurried scuffling through the labyrinth of dirty passages to pay their respects to the rising sun. Monsieur and Madame were exceedingly happy and triumphant. He had all that heart could desire in the way of money and amusement, and the fate of his former friends had not troubled him for a day. She looked forward confidently to being the mother of a future King of France. It was some additional satisfaction, possibly, that neither the King nor the Queen could very well hide the jealous sadness such a prospect caused them.

The best known description of Madame—*physionomie de mouton*—does not suggest beauty, though old writers say she was beautiful. Perhaps the truth is that her looks and disposition were both lamb-like; but the courtiers and the gossips took a different view, declaring that she was *fière comme un dragon*. This means, probably, that she was a modest, dignified woman, who fearlessly showed her dislike of the extreme freedom of manners that lay just beneath the top crust of courtly affectation. She was fond of Monsieur, who had his attractive side, and did her best, during their few months of married life, to make a man of him. She tried to please him by indulgences she could easily afford, her fortune being largely at her own disposal. Find-

ing him, through the influence of his friends, a little reserved and cold, she hoped to draw him nearer to her by presents of money, bestowed whenever he came back from the gaming table in a bad temper. Gambling was one of his chief resources during that winter, and he had one or two other characteristic amusements. Sometimes he spent the night wandering in disguise, with a few gentlemen, in the dark and dangerous streets of Paris. Any house lighted up for an entertainment was liable to be entered by these uninvited guests, and scandals were frequently the consequence. If Madame knew of these expeditions, she felt no alarm, except for Monsieur's personal safety. No other fears troubled her generous, unsuspecting mind.

Monsieur had worthier tastes and more innocent games. He collected pictures, medals, *bibelots*, and all kinds of antiquities. He liked botany, studied herbs and simples, had flowers painted from nature in a large book by Jules Donnabella. He had meetings of his friends—Puylaurens conspicuous among them—for discussions either serious or grotesque. Sometimes they held councils of "Vauriennerie," at which they managed the affairs of an imaginary kingdom. Monsieur himself made the map of this strange country—possibly the original of Mlle de Scudéry's *carte du Pays de Tendre*—gave names to its provinces, cities, and rivers, and appointed its great officers, to whom he wrote despatches. One of them was the Abbé de la Rivière, already his favourite; another was Antoine de Bourbon, Comte de Moret, his half-brother, who is said to have been more like Henry IV than any other of his children. Historians say that this young man, brought up as an ecclesiastic, but a brilliant soldier, fell in Gaston's quarrel at Castelnaudary. Tradition, which the paintings at Fontevault seem to prove worthy of belief, saves him from that rout, carries him away into Italy, and gives him sixty years more of life as Brother John Baptist, a hermit at Gardelles, near Saumur, in the green depth of Anjou.

Winter and spring passed in this way for the two royal

households in the Louvre : on one side, half-shown jealousy and dismal fear ; on the other, triumph and hope without any reserve. The weeks travelled on leaden feet for Monsieur, with all his pastimes. At last, instead of the expected prince, Mademoiselle arrived ; and the most part of France, *faute de mieux*, received her very well. Princess Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans was popular from her cradle. She was a terrible disappointment to her father, for she did not increase his consequence in the State. The Queen-mother and Richelieu, as well as all those who had lately paid court to Monsieur, were furious with the Fates who had deprived them of a future dauphin. The King and Queen and their personal friends—entirely distinct parties, for there was no sympathy between them—found themselves for once in a state of pleasant agreement. They had not wished for a nephew, and they gave a very kind welcome to their baby niece. For once Louis XIII could look out on Paris with a smile ; the joy of the good Parisians, the ringing of the bells for this new princess, found echoes in his melancholy soul.

A few days later, in the first week of June, those joy-bells were followed by a funeral chime, for Madame was dead. The grief was universal, except among Monsieur's favourites, Puylaurens and others, who feared her good influence on their master. The news touched court and city, probably, more nearly than any since King Henry was stabbed by François Ravailac, the royal coach being blocked by wine-carts and hay-waggon at the corner of the Rue de la Ferronnerie, on the 14th of May, seventeen years before.

The young Duchess was buried in royal state at Saint-Denis. The King and all the princes assisted at the magnificent ceremony, and the Queen was present incognito. This being unusual, her motives were a good deal discussed. But Anne of Austria was by no means bad at heart, and it was not strange if, after suffering the torments of jealousy and even hatred for so many months, she was touched by the pathetic end of her young sister-in-law. Still she was

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY YEARS 11

Spanish, and she never quite forgave her own sufferings throughout that winter. There were days long after when Mademoiselle, her niece, felt their consequences.

The persons who grieved most sincerely for Madame's untimely death were her mother and her mother-in-law. Monsieur's sorrow was noisy, but fleeting; the marriage, after all, had been forced upon him, and he consoled himself easily with his old amusements, soon varied by a fresh conspiracy. Puylaurens, Le Coigneux and the rest took care of that. To Madame de Guise the loss was heartbreaking and irreparable. The young Duchess had been the most obedient and loving of daughters; besides this, her marriage had given the House of Lorraine a good place in the fight for honours and possessions, always going on. And last, possibly least, Madame de Guise had made a wedding gift to her daughter of her great diamond, one of the finest known, given to her father the Duc de Joyeuse by Henry III, and valued at eighty thousand crowns. This diamond passed with all the rest of Marie de Bourbon's possessions to her little daughter, who, at least when a child, thought rather scornfully of a grandmother who was not a queen.

Marie de Médicis, fat, unwise, ill-judging if also ill-used, weak, violent-tempered, was a kind-hearted woman with strong family affections. She had pressed on her son's marriage and rejoiced in it, for personal as well as political reasons. His riotous living troubled her, if only for the sake of his constitution; and she sincerely mourned a daughter-in-law who seemed likely to influence him for good. However, the short-lived experiment being over, there remained Mademoiselle. Her grandmother, the Queen, took charge at once of the child, whose fortune and estates were formally held in trust by her father during her minority.

Mademoiselle owed a great deal to Queen Marie de Médicis, and realised the debt, though she was not four years old when her grandmother was driven out of France, after the *Journée des Dupes*, never to return. She owed her a childhood watched over by a charming woman, the Marquise de

Saint-Georges, who had an almost hereditary right, however, to command a royal nursery.

All the children of Henry IV, the sons till they were eight years old and passed on to a governor, the daughters much longer, had been brought up by her mother, Madame de Montglat, one of those rare good women in a brilliant, coarse, unprincipled time, of whom even court gossips could not tell a disreputable story. She was the beloved "Maman Ga" of Louis XIII, his brother Nicolas, Duc d'Orléans, who died a child, and Gaston, Duc d'Anjou; his sisters Élisabeth, Queen of Spain, Christine, Duchess of Savoy, Henriette-Marie, Queen of England, *la Reine Malheureuse*, youngest and unhappiest of all. In the days of Madame de Montglat they were a lovely little family of most attractive children.

Madame de Saint-Georges, as a young married woman, had been much in their nursery. She afterwards became lady-in-waiting, first to the Duchess of Savoy, then to the Queen of England, and at this time had very lately returned to France. It was in 1626 that Charles I insisted on sending back the French members of his wife's household, and the departure of Madame de Saint-Georges from London had been very stormy.

She now took charge of the new grandchild of France, also the greatest heiress in Europe, treated, for both reasons, with the highest honours the Court could bestow. A household of much dignity having been organised for Mademoiselle, she was carried in her swaddling clothes along the great gallery, lately finished, that led from the Louvre to the Tuileries. Here she was established in a suite of splendid rooms, looking west towards the formal gardens of the palace, though divided from them by a street. The gardens extended as far as a wild sandy warren where the royal kennels were, now the Place de la Concorde. The Tuileries was still the fantastic, original palace which Philibert de l'Orme had built for Queen Catherine de Médicis.

The world wagged with considerable violence round those high walls, round the cradle where Mademoiselle, carefully

watched night and day, slept and laughed and played with her first toys and grew quickly into the fair, blue-eyed beauty of her childhood. Naturally, it was long before she knew anything of the State intrigues and family quarrels which surrounded her. She did not even miss the grandmother who had taken her mother's place when Marie de Médicis ceased to come, driving across Paris from her own new palace of the Luxembourg, to visit the child at the Tuileries. Monsieur had disappeared a few weeks before, after violently taking his mother's part in her quarrel with the King and with Richelieu—once her slave, then her ally, now, for himself and the State, her deadly enemy and persecutor.

The visits of a grandmother, however kind, a rather worried, ponderous lady of fifty-seven, with Madame de Saint-Georges as a go-between, were more easy to forget than those of Mademoiselle's lively and picturesque young father. She had seen him constantly, and loved him dearly. He had left the Louvre after his wife's death, but in the intervals of his varied flirtations and amusements, and when he was not playing at war with the English or making love to a future Madame—greatly to the royal displeasure—at the Court of Lorraine, he was often with his little daughter at the Tuileries, and she found him a charming companion. He played games with her, whistled and sang to her—he was a musician, like most of his family—taught her songs with gay refrains, such as they sang in the streets, sometimes about himself—none the less enjoyable—sometimes about the *Éminence rouge*, the ogre of the Court, *Maître Gonin*, Cardinal de Richelieu. Madame de Saint-Georges may have had some difficulty in driving “*Ton, ton, ton, Monsieur Ribaudon, tutaine, tuton, tutaine,*” and “*Guillemette, lon lan la,*” and “*Landerirette, landerira,*” and other *refrains de vaudeville* hardly fit for little girls, out of Mademoiselle's mouth and memory.

The child, quick-tempered, proud, and constant to those she loved, understood easily enough who was to blame for her father's disappearance. She was very angry with the

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King and the Cardinal; she kicked and screamed when her royal uncle and aunt sent for her to visit them at the Louvre. Her feeling towards Richelieu never changed, but she soon forgave her uncle. Louis XIII, when not unbearably weighed down by the responsibilities of kingdom and family, had qualities which made him a very good playfellow. Mademoiselle liked him personally, and always valued his kindness.

Anne of Austria, too, was kind, but Mademoiselle never loved her; there was always some impassable barrier between the Spanish Queen—forced to walk warily by her husband's dislike and Richelieu's politics strangely lined with passion—and the French Princess, who even as a child, frank, haughty, outspoken, was an incarnation of the Bourbon temper.

But the King loved games as well as his brother, different as the two men were. He not only wrote verses and composed songs—unlike Gaston's—and arranged ballets of the most delightful kind, with masks and fancy dresses, to be danced by all those lovely ladies to whose charms he was so oddly indifferent, but he was a confectioner, a gardener, a maker of nets, a worker in leather and metal. Then he loved natural history, had a fine collection of birds, and the best horses and dogs in Europe. He was the last King of France who cared for the ancient sport of falconry. He could tell stories without end, if he chose; and being still, with all his bored looks, something of the *enfant enfantissime* of his young days, it is well to be believed that he amused himself and his little niece by making castles and coaches of cards, or swimming feather boats with a cargo of roses, “disant que ce sont navires qui viennent des Indes et de Goa.”

These visits to the Louvre, and afterwards to Fontainebleau, with a fresh round of amusements, and with the pleasure of feeling herself a person of an immense importance disputed by no other royal children, carried Mademoiselle through the few years that passed before Monsieur came back to his country. She was then not eight years

old, a brilliantly pretty little girl. She knew little or nothing of her father's past doings, of the history of his wars against the King, of the noble lives that had been sacrificed in his quarrel; but her quick ears heard and her heart and tongue resented Richelieu's first conditions, disgraceful enough, as to the reconciliation.

They took her to meet Gaston at Limours. He, with his charming fancy, took off the *cordons bleus* which distinguished him from the gentlemen of his suite, and the child was asked, "Which is Monsieur?" She flew straight into his arms, and the worthless young fellow was touched with a marvellous joy.

CHAPTER II

"J'aurai toujours au cœur écrite
Sur toutes fleurs la Marguerite."

THE NEW MADAME—HER ADVENTURES—THE FATE OF PUYLAURENS
—THE PLAYFELLOWS OF MADEMOISELLE—HIS EMINENCE HER GOD-
FATHER

M ADEMOISELLE had now a stepmother, not much more than double her own age. But Louis and the Cardinal were unforgiving, and Gaston's return from exile had not meant the acknowledgment of his new wife. It is characteristic that though he was really in love with Princess Marguerite of Lorraine, and though he had married her, twice over, under very romantic circumstances, he came back happily without her, sacrificing, as usual, what was most dear to the ease and convenience of the moment.

He confided the whole story to Mademoiselle, who listened with delight, being already a strong champion of her young stepmother and the forbidden marriage. Monsieur had fallen in love with Princess Marguerite at Nancy, at the Court of her brother, Duke Charles IV, before she was sixteen. He had married her secretly, two years later, when he was himself an exile. Most of her relations were flattered by the alliance, but her brother the Duke could not give his consent without bringing down the power of France on Lorraine, the King and the Cardinal being strongly opposed to a marriage which would strengthen the hands of their enemy, Spain, and of all those, within and without the kingdom, whose sympathies were with the Queen-mother and Monsieur.

Outside politics, the Duke of Lorraine's consent was not so necessary, as his father the Prince de Vaudemont was alive and favourable. And there were other strong influences at

work. The Sieur de Puylaurens, who pulled all the strings of Gaston's life at this time, had fallen desperately in love with Madame Henriette de Lorraine, Princesse de Phalsbourg, Marguerite's elder sister. She, knowing his influence on his master, made use of him as a stepping-stone for the family ambition—to see the young Marguerite, at no distant day, Queen of France.

Things were brought to a point by the energy of the Abbess of Remiremont, a Lorraine Princess and aunt of Marguerite. She had built a convent of Benedictine nuns at Nancy, and she arranged that the lovers should meet there, at seven o'clock on a winter's evening. A Benedictine monk was waiting in the chapel, and they were quietly married; the witnesses being the Prince de Vaudemont, Gaston's half-brother the Comte de Moret, Puylaurens, and Madame de la Neuville, Princess Marguerite's governess. Immediately after the marriage Monsieur fled, "aux flambeaux," leaving his bride behind him, and escaped to his mother at Brussels, where neither the Duke of Lorraine's "despair" nor the anger of the King and Cardinal could reach him.

He and his young wife did not meet again for many months, and then only for a few hours. After this followed his unhappy expedition into France, which ended in the defeat of Castelnau, the sacrifice of so many brave lives for him, and the utter ruin of the great House of Montmorency. Richelieu's strength and terrible severity, the death of Henry de Montmorency, noblest and most brilliant of Frenchmen, on the scaffold at Toulouse, shook French society sharply to its centre, and made nothing but submission possible for Gaston, unless he chose to remain in exile, with Queen Marie de Médicis, for the rest of his brother's life.

Everybody knew what was likely to be one of Richelieu's conditions of peace—the declaring the Lorraine marriage null and void. Even Mademoiselle in her nursery had known that and resented it. In fact, it was not long after the Languedoc campaign that the King's army entered Lorraine

and besieged Nancy. The Duke could not hold out long against his suzerain, except by throwing himself into the arms of Spain and seeing his duchy divided between the two Powers. Louis would soon have had his way as to the marriage. Nancy was to be surrendered in ten days and the young Princess placed in the hands of the King. But they all reckoned without Madame Marguerite, who had no intention of giving up her husband at the bidding of King, Cardinal, or even Pope.

Her brother, the Cardinal de Lorraine, had asked permission of the besiegers to leave Nancy with his suite. She determined to escape in disguise as one of his gentlemen. With a spirit worthy of Madame de Chevreuse or Madame de Longueville, she dressed herself in men's clothes, clapped on a black wig over her fair hair, darkened her skin by rubbing in soot, and went at five o'clock in the morning, as the old memoirs tell us, to say adieu to Madame de Remiremont at the Benedictine convent. The nuns, singing their office in the dimly lit chapel, looked up, and their voices quavered with terror at the sight of an armed man. But Madame soon reassured them. They prayed with her for a successful journey, and after affectionate farewells the girl left them, slipping away in rising daylight to the coach in which she was to begin her journey.

In passing through the royal army she had a narrow escape: the passports of the Cardinal's suite were examined, and if the right officer had performed this duty, he would certainly have recognised the Princess, whom he knew by sight. But M. du Châtelier was in bed at that early hour, and the young Duchess in her disguise passed unarrested. When safely through the camp, she mounted and rode about forty miles without stopping, out of Lorraine territory to Thionville, which was in the hands of Spain. Before entering the town she sent one of her two servants with a message to the Governor, M. de Wilthz, and in the meanwhile, dead tired, she lay down on the grass near the gate. The sentinel looked laughing at the dark boy, and remarked that this

young cadet was not used to long rides. The Governor sent down in haste, and his wife received the fugitive with tender respect, providing her with clothes until her own baggage was sent after her. She travelled on to Namur, where Monsieur joyfully met her and conveyed her to Brussels.

After some time, Cardinal de Richelieu doing his best to have the first marriage declared null and void, Monsieur and Madame were solemnly married again at Brussels by the Archbishop of Malines. This marriage was confirmed and approved by the Doctors of the Faculty of Louvain. Thus ecclesiastical law was satisfied ; and the Pope never gave his consent to the nullifying of the marriage, even when the Church authorities in France, under Richelieu's orders, pronounced a decree of separation. Monsieur remained faithful to his wife, although he bowed to the storm so far as to live in France for several years without her. At first, the King allowed him to send her a handsome pension, but this stopped when war was declared with Spain. Marie de Médicis, herself in serious difficulties, could not help her daughter-in-law, and Madame seems to have lived on the charity of the Spanish Court till the death of her French persecutors. Then, at last, she took her right place in her husband's country ; but the charm and the spirit of her youth had passed away.

Monsieur's return to France, married or unmarried, was looked upon by Louis XIII and Richelieu as a political necessity. The Cardinal brought it about by intriguing with Puylaurens, who, having quarrelled with Madame de Phalsbourg, was not unwilling to make terms for himself and his master. Richelieu's first plan, if he could have done away with the Lorraine marriage, was to make a match between Monsieur and his own niece, Madame de Combalet, afterwards created Duchesse d'Aiguillon, an ambitious woman, whose airs of devotion were remarkable, even in that age of extremes. Mademoiselle justly hits off this plan as "shameful and ridiculous," and it seems that everybody agreed with her. The suggestion was one of Richelieu's few mistakes.

In Mademoiselle's childish eyes, the return of her charming young father was something like a triumph. As long as he was in Paris he devoted himself to her amusement. He arranged a ballet specially for her, the royal dances being too grown-up for people of eight years old. This ballet, a "dance of pygmies," was composed of little princesses, and girls and boys of quality, magnificently dressed. The figures and steps were easy, and the "entrées," with which the ballet was diversified, were suited to the company. Cages full of birds were let loose in the ballroom. Flying wildly about, a bird caught itself in the frills of Mademoiselle Claire-Clémence de Maillé-Brézé, the Cardinal's niece, afterwards the wife of the great Condé and the heroine of Bordeaux. She was not heroic on this occasion, and her shrieks and tears made the whole company scream with laughter.

Mademoiselle was a good deal flattered by the attention of M. de Puylaurens, who had been rewarded with a dukedom and peerage for his services in bringing Monsieur back to France. He had also received a wife at the Cardinal's hands—Mademoiselle de Pontchâteau, cousin of His Eminence—and to all appearance was high in favour. He gained Mademoiselle's heart by treating her with the ceremony due to a grown-up person, considerably sweetened by large presents of *confitures*. But Puylaurens, like so many others who incautiously trusted themselves at Court when the Cardinal still doubted their loyalty or had anything in their past lives to forgive, speedily fell from his high estate. Only a few weeks had passed when he was arrested and taken to Vincennes. There he died a few months later, another victim of Richelieu's unsparing vengeance. Some said that he was poisoned by eating "champignons du bois de Vincennes"; the same thing had been said of other prisoners, the Maréchal d'Ornano, the Grand Prieur de Vendôme; but it seems that the damp, unwholesome chill of the vaulted dungeons of Vincennes was quite sufficiently murderous.

Monsieur took the disgrace and death of his friend with

a cheerful indifference, and retired soon after to his estates in the West. Mademoiselle, who was always rather the child of France, the granddaughter of Henry IV, than the daughter of the Duc d'Orléans, remained with Madame de Saint-Georges and various young companions at the Tuileries. A singular figure in her surroundings was a pet dwarf, "the smallest ever seen," with an alarmingly large nose. Ursule Matton was her name.

Among the young girls who were Mademoiselle's playfellows at this time, and her friends and acquaintances always, one at least was of legitimate royal blood—Mademoiselle de Longueville, afterwards married to Henri, Duc de Nemours, only and spoilt child of that typical French noble and very good-natured man, the Duc de Longueville, by his first marriage with Louise de Bourbon, granddaughter of the first Prince de Condé. He married, in 1642, a second wife half his own age, the beautiful and famous Anne Geneviève de Bourbon, daughter of Henry Prince de Condé and Charlotte Marguerite de Montmorency. Mademoiselle de Bourbon, the adored angel of the Court, eight years older than Mademoiselle de Montpensier, was never either her playfellow or her friend. Mademoiselle's hates were as cordial as her loves, and in these days she detested the House of Condé. She was very fond of Mademoiselle de Longueville, a clever, sharp-tongued girl; they were always joking and laughing together; but her special affection was given to Mademoiselle d'Épernon, whose mother, Gabrielle-Angélique de Bourbon, was a daughter of Henry IV and Henriette d'Entragues, Marquise de Verneuil, and who caused her the greatest sorrow, some years later, by becoming a Carmelite nun.

Others among Mademoiselle's early friends were the young daughters of Timoléon de Daillon, Comte du Lude, who had been for a short time governor of Monsieur. Strange legends of the Middle Ages hung round the name of Daillon, and even now they haunt the neighbourhood of Le Lude, in Anjou, where the splendid old château, long

passed away from the ancient name, still stands above the Loir. There was also Charlotte de Rancé, with whom Mademoiselle kept up a lifelong friendship. Her wild brother, the notorious Abbé Armand de Rancé, afterwards the reformer of La Trappe, attended many years later, not long after his own tragical conversion, the sad death-bed of Monsieur. It was with his advice and help that Mademoiselle, in advancing age, made various charitable foundations on the estates left to her by the greed of Madame de Montespan.

These young people and many others played together at the Tuileries and danced before the King and Queen at the Louvre, enjoying life from day to day with all the energy of their country and time, with no serious interests beyond balls and comedies, dress and toys and sugar-plums, and very little trouble of lessons. Mademoiselle, at least, was let off easily under the light authority of Madame de Saint-Georges. She could read, write, dance, and ride; that was all. And for a girl of Mademoiselle's lively wits, with no turn and no necessity for classical learning, it appears to have been enough. She could appreciate Corneille, and knew how to make his ideals her own. She had an instinctive knowledge of what a princess ought to be. She was intelligent in matters of business. And never, in youth or old age, with a restless, imperious temper and plenty of foolish fancies and ambitions, was there anything mean or small about Mademoiselle.

As a child, the one person who gave her serious annoyance was the red-robed ogre, Richelieu. He moved in a Court where no one liked him and every one feared him—a tall, slight, wasted figure, with white hair, dark pointed beard, and moustache brushed up sharply. The long thin hand was of iron, without Henry IV's velvet glove, and might at any moment, moved by some secret spring of information, dart down on some unhappy courtier and whisk him off to Vincennes or the Bastille. Mademoiselle hated Richelieu, not alone for the sake of her father and his

friends. He had a way of injuring her young royal dignity by treating her as "a little girl." At nine years old, she had to go through a terrible ceremony of baptism; she had, of course, been baptised as an infant, but this was the public christening. The Queen was her godmother, the Cardinal her godfather. This alone hurt her pride; but when he gave her good advice, and promised to marry her well, he became quite insupportable. She would not have been absolutely displeased, perhaps, had she known that at this ceremony of her baptism the Cardinal narrowly escaped assassination, and from the hands of a future Cardinal—no less a personage than the Abbé de Retz, then a wild scamp of two-and-twenty.

It is no great wonder that Richelieu, with the fate of France in his hands, with personal enemies all round him and no supporter to depend on but the King, with the noises of war rolling more and more loudly round and over the frontiers of the kingdom, could not give much time or thought to pleasing women and children. Still, he had a taste in toys, if we may judge by a present he made to his niece, Claire-Clémence de Maillé-Brézé. This was a little room completely furnished and inhabited by dolls; a lady in bed, a baby, a grandmother, a nurse and other servants. All these could be dressed and undressed, and gave immense satisfaction, if not to Mademoiselle, to many of her young contemporaries.

The Comte de Brienne's queer story of Cardinal de Richelieu shows the odd mixture of love and hatred which moved him where Anne of Austria was concerned. Had the Queen encouraged the Cardinal, the course of history might have been altered. So people said at the time. The long war with Spain, for instance, might never have begun. One can hardly believe that even Anne's singular charm would have had power to turn Richelieu from his one object, the aggrandisement of France. But there was a background of private quarrel and intrigue to all the politics of that day.

One day, says the Comte de Brienne, the Queen and a

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friend of hers were talking together and laughing at the Cardinal.

"He is passionately in love, Madame," said the confidante. "There is nothing he would not do to please Your Majesty. Shall I send him to you, some evening, dressed *en baladin*; shall I make him dance a saraband? Would you like it? He would come."

"What nonsense!" said the Queen.

But she was young, gay, and lively; the idea was diverting. She took the lady at her word, and allowed her to go to the Cardinal.

He accepted the singular rendezvous, and came at the appointed time. Boccau, the famous violin-player, had been engaged, and sworn to secrecy; but are such secrets ever kept? The Queen, her friend, the musician, and two gentlemen were hidden behind a screen; yet not so carefully that they could not enjoy the spectacle. Richelieu was dressed in green velvet; he had silver bells at his knees and castanets in his hands; he danced the saraband to Boccau's music. The spectators laughed till they could laugh no more. "After fifty years," says the Comte de Brienne, "I laugh myself when I think of it!"

But the *Éminence rouge* was a dangerous plaything; his follies were froth on the surface, and the Queen's worst experience of his power was yet to come.

CHAPTER III

1637

“ Laboissière, dis-moi
Vais-je pas bien en homme ?
—Vous chevauchez, ma foi,
Mieux que tant que nous sommes.
Elle est
Parmi les hallebardes
Au régiment des gardes,
Comme un cadet.”

ON THE ROADS—MARIE DE ROHAN, DUCHESSE DE CHEVREUSE—
THE AFFAIR OF THE VAL-DE-GRÂCE—A FAMOUS RIDE—LA ROCHE-
FOUCAULD—MADEMOISELLE AT CHANTILLY

IT was always the custom, after travelling became possible at all, for great people to escape from the heat and horrible smells of Paris at the end of the summer. The nobles fled to their castles, which in Richelieu's days suffered much dismantling of walls and towers. Some of them found consolation in laying out splendid gardens in a style full of formal affectations, yet with a grandeur of its own. The Royalties, weary of Saint-Germain and Fontainebleau, often followed the fashion set in a former century and travelled in state about the kingdom. Sometimes they borrowed a palatial house from its owners ; sometimes they were entertained, as Henry IV so often was, by great seigneurs or princes of the blood. Trains of coaches, carts, baggage-waggons, pack-horses, mules, troops of guards or armed servants, were added to the usual population of the great roads, always lively with highwaymen, beggars, gipsies, pedlars, students, travelling players, caravans and shows, as well as the smaller public who travelled unwillingly and of necessity, messengers, merchants, ecclesiastics, or occasion-

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ally English foreigners on their way to Italy or Spain. Great people needed great trains, for they travelled with their beds and all necessary furniture, with their household servants and stores of provisions of every kind. Their nightly hosts on the way were asked, in theory at least, for no hospitality beyond bare walls. The King himself, when he invited guests to his palaces, gave them no more, except an occasional banquet.

Journeys became a serious matter when one had to leave the *route royale* itself, frequently bad and dangerous enough, for the lanes, the tracks across wild heaths and through forest country, the narrow causeways crossing marshy ground, the rotten bridges or uncertain fords of streams. Many of the great castles, many even of the smaller towns, unless lucky enough to stand on a high road or a river, were plunged in remote country that could only be penetrated in such-like risky ways. And the lonely woods and moors had other dangers of their own. Even after Louis XIII's reign, and in spite of Richelieu's years of stern home rule, some of the smaller country nobles, hidden away in their almost inaccessible towers among the forests, led the life of robbers and rebels which had come down in tradition from the civil wars of the sixteenth century. Like the savage barons of the Middle Ages, they pounced down on any unhappy traveller in difficulties, and if he escaped alive out of their hands, he left his valuables behind him. And justice, even under Richelieu, had some difficulty in tracing and punishing these adventurers.

The manners of the League were quite in discredit at Court and among the higher society, a change partly owing to the wave of Church reform under Marie de Médicis, partly to the romantic influence of *L'Astrée* and of Corneille's early plays, partly to the new atmosphere of the Hôtel de Rambouillet and to the dignified Spanish ideas of Anne of Austria. Brutality was out of fashion; but it still existed; all the memoirs and stories of the time bear witness to that. And the few poor *hobereaux* who found their profit and

excitement in highway robbery, in coining false money, in oppressing and torturing miserable peasants, were not much worse than the many great people, men and women, whose restless lives were spent in unscrupulous plotting and treason, and who for the sake of their own wild amusement, quite as much as for the defence of their order, devastated France by such wars as the second Fronde.

They lived every moment of their lives, those people of Mademoiselle's early days. They breathed danger and adventure. Some of them—of whom Madame de Chevreuse was a type—never hesitated between the joy of opposition and risk of life and liberty. Through nearly all the lifetime of Louis XIII, Anne of Austria's name is not to be separated from that of the daring friend who did her best to drag the Queen into the moral and political scrapes which were her own native air. Marie de Rohan was a gay and audacious creature, frank, affectionate, loyal to her many lovers and friends. If her portraits are to be trusted, her lovely face had the expression of an innocent child. Poor Chalais was not the only man who died for his faith in her. Devoted to the Queen from her first coming into France, and as Duchesse de Luynes the chief of her ladies, she was to blame for the Buckingham adventure, the greatest and most narrowly escaped danger of Anne's life. But religious scruples and Spanish reserve were rather ridiculous to Madame de Chevreuse, who had neither.

She was born of an old and illustrious race, the daughter of Hercule de Rohan, Duc de Montbazon. She inherited all the pride and the fearless independence of the Rohan motto,

Roi ne puis,
Prince ne daigne,
Rohan je suis.

Her early marriage with Luynes was something of a *més-alliance*, in spite of the high place he had gained; she made up for it by her second marriage with the Duc de Chevreuse, of the House of Lorraine, as much above Luynes in birth as below him in intellect and character. She was a great lady

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of the greatest, superior to fashions and laws, "*trop grande dame pour daigner connaître la retenue et n'ayant d'autre frein que l'honneur.*" Public opinion was nothing to her. She had a genius for intrigue, scorned the thought of danger, would go to any length for her friends without a spark of personal ambition. The game of politics was for her a passion, in which her dashing courage and brilliant cleverness never failed, but she did not play it in her own interest. Neither Richelieu nor his successor had a more dangerous enemy than Madame de Chevreuse.

In the late summer of 1637, Mademoiselle, a forward child of ten, on that first country journey which taught her some curious things about the world she lived in, just missed seeing Madame de Chevreuse at Tours. She was in the act of flying from Richelieu's dreaded vengeance into Spain.

The details of the Val-de-Grâce intrigue are complicated and curious. A letter written by the Queen to Madame de Chevreuse—then exiled from the Court and living chiefly at Tours near her devoted, eccentric admirer, the old Archbishop—was intercepted by Richelieu's spies and its bearer, the Queen's valet, La Porte, thrown into prison. This letter seems to have been the first distinct proof gained by the Cardinal of a correspondence kept up by Anne with her relatives in Spain and the Low Countries, as well as with the Court of London and with the Duke of Lorraine—all enemies of Richelieu, if not of France. This correspondence was partly, no doubt, on family affairs, but it contained a good deal of political information; in fact, from her own confession, the ill-used Queen had been persecuted and provoked into great imprudence, if not disloyalty. Even Madame de Motteville, who from her childhood loved and revered the Queen, though it was only after the King's death that she became her personal attendant, owns that Anne "*faisoit quelques petites intrigues contre le cardinal, on tout au moins désiroit d'en faire qui eussent réussi à sa ruine.*" Thus it was a personal matter with Richelieu, who could now take a justifiable revenge, in disgracing the Queen

and punishing her friends, for any past scornfulness on her part. The Convent of the Val-de-Grâce, in the Faubourg St. Jacques, a favourite refuge of the Queen, who had founded it, and who often wrote and received letters there, was visited and searched by the Archbishop of Paris and Chancellor Seguier. The Abbess, Louise de Milley, called the Mère de Saint-Etienne, of Spanish birth, and therefore the more devoted to the Queen, was threatened with excommunication and forced to resign her office. There was a talk of the Queen's being divorced and sent back to Spain; people said that Richelieu intended to marry the King to his niece, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, whom he had already destined for Monsieur. However, after threats and scoldings and disgrace and humiliation deep enough to satisfy the Cardinal, and after being forbidden to write any letters without the King's knowledge or to visit any convents without his leave, the Queen was solemnly forgiven. One may judge whether she and her friends loved Richelieu any better. The Court in general was afraid to take the Queen's part, but at the worst moment she very nearly accepted the romantic offer of young La Rochefoucauld, then Prince de Marcillac and an adorer of Madame de Chevreuse, to carry her off with her most loyal maid of honour, Mademoiselle de Hautefort, to her aunt the Infanta at Brussels. Such an *enlèvement* would indeed have been a choice jewel among the adventures of the time.

The idea was probably suggested by that queen of romance, Madame de Chevreuse. Richelieu knew very well that she was the moving spirit of all opposition and every intrigue; still the fascination of her beauty and originality was so great, that he had never attempted to punish her more seriously than by exile—trying enough to a woman of her character. Even after the Val-de-Grâce affair he wrote to her in friendly terms, and appeared to accept her own explanation of the part she had played. But Madame de Chevreuse knew the Cardinal too well to trust his fair words. Her friends at Court warned her that he meant to imprison

her at Loches, a terrible prospect. They arranged a warning signal, in case the danger was imminent. A Book of Hours was to be sent to her from Paris; if bound in green, it would mean safety; if in red, danger. A green book arrived; it seems that, the Queen having confessed and been formally forgiven, Richelieu really meant to let Madame de Chevreuse alone. In her eager anxiety she mistook the sign; the cold shadow of Loches fell upon her; there was nothing for it but instant flight.

The old Archbishop did his best for her; he was a loyal friend, though hardly a credit to the Church, if all the stories about him are true. For instance, he and Madame de Chevreuse were one day much moved by a representation of Tristan's *Mariamne*.

"It seems to me, monseigneur," she said, "we are not touched by the story of the Passion as we are by this play."

"Je crois bien, madame," he answered; "c'est histoire, ceci, c'est histoire. I have read it in Josephus."

A foreshadowing of the Higher Criticism, perhaps! But it is to be counted among Richelieu's good deeds that he prevented this worthy man from being made a Cardinal.

The Archbishop was of a Basque family, a native of Béarn. All the roads from Paris to the south were intimately known to him, and he had relations on the Spanish frontier. He gave Madame de Chevreuse letters of credit and wrote down many directions for the journey. But in her haste and terror she lost or forgot everything. Leaving her old friend in despair and lamentation, she rode off with two servants dressed as a man, her head bound up that she might pass for a gentleman wounded in a duel. Everybody would help such a person to escape. Duels were forbidden, a most unpopular law among the golden youth of France; the edict against duelling, like that for demolishing fortresses, was part of Richelieu's plan for bringing the nobles under authority. They never forgave him the execution of the Counts de Boutteville-Montmorency and des Chapelles, the first victims of this law.

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When Madame de Chevreuse had ridden some leagues on the south road without rest or food, she arrived utterly exhausted at Ruffec, near which was the Duc de la Rochefoucauld's Château of Verteuil. She discovered that the Duke himself was away, but Marcillac, her admirer, was there. Had he been alone she might have asked for hospitality; but his mother the Duchess was at home, as well as his much-neglected wife, and the name of Madame de Chevreuse was alarming to ladies of more conventional manners. She sent Marcillac a characteristic note by one of her men.

"Monsieur,—I am a French gentleman, and ask your help in saving my liberty, perhaps my life. I have had an unlucky fight. I have killed a well-known nobleman. Justice is in search of me, and I must leave France at once. I think you are generous enough to help me without knowing me. I am in need of a coach and a servant to guide me."

Marcillac in his young days, as everybody knows, was the handsomest, the most brilliant, in many ways the most distinguished, of the high nobility of France. His literary fame was of a later growth. His courage, of course, was beyond question, but it was not the single-fold courage of such a man as Condé, and with all his attractiveness he was not generous. They say he was irresolute; probably he was too clever, too imaginative, to act without calculation.

He knew the handwriting of Madame de Chevreuse. He was also aware of being himself slightly entangled in the Val-de-Grâce intrigue, and to that extent out of favour at Court. The Château de Verteuil, as usual at this time of the year, was full of guests, and Marcillac could not, without everybody's knowledge, have gone personally to the fugitive's aid. Only two miles off; she may very well have expected him. He did more than she asked, however. He sent her a coach and four, four saddle-horses, and three men.

She had been too impatient to wait at Ruffec. A hundred yards from the gates of Verteuil the servants met a young gentleman dressed in black with a fair wig, who threw him-

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self into the coach, "*paroissant fort las.*" Then the coach with its small escort rumbled and jolted along the country roads of southern Poitou—a stony land scattered with oaks and chestnuts—till three o'clock the next morning, when after a drive of weary length it drew up at another house belonging to the La Rochefoucaulds, inhabited by a gentleman with the unattractive name of Malbasty.

He and his wife received the supposed young seigneur respectfully, as a friend of M. de Marcillac. The coach was sent back from this place, as well as the fugitive's own two servants. She mounted again and rode on southward, attended by Malbasty and one of the men from Verteuil. Malbasty was completely mystified, and devoured by curiosity. The journey was full of romantic incidents. The rough inns on the road, with their mixed, uncivilised company, were not at all to the young gentleman's taste. At one place he slept on hay in a barn, utterly exhausted, after refusing with disgust the dinner of boiled goose which was brought to him. A worthy woman of the village, passing by the open barn doors and seeing him there, cried out in pity and admiration, "That's the handsomest boy I ever saw! I'm sorry for you, sir! Won't you come and rest at my house?" The traveller thanked her in a low, hoarse voice, but declined to move. The good creature hurried home and came back with half a dozen fresh eggs, which were gratefully accepted.

At the end of the first day, Malbasty begged his mysterious charge to tell him his name. The unknown answered that he was the Duc d'Enghien, obliged to leave France for a secret reason. Whether Malbasty believed this, or whether he was reassured by finding himself mixed up in the mad doings of a Prince of the blood, the story does not say. But at the end of the second day, when Malbasty was to return home, the Duchess suddenly and frankly declared herself, and told him that she was escaping for political reasons, but without any ill will against the King or the Cardinal. Malbasty was extremely distressed; her charm

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY YEARS 33

never failed with man or woman, grandee, simple gentleman, or lackey. He begged her not to go on, pointing out the many dangers of the road. She would lose herself in the marshy, almost pathless *landes*, or among the rocks and forests and torrents, the wild, high valleys of the Pyrenees. She would meet with robbers, bears, wolves, lynxes, and she had only one man to defend her.

There had already been a foretaste of adventures. She had turned off the road to avoid the Marquis d'Antin and a troop of horse. She had been accosted by a mysterious gentleman dressed in red, who approached her with many bows, was angrily waved away, but dogged her steps as far as the next inn.

Madame de Chevreuse would listen to no warnings. She entrusted Malbastay with a letter for her old friend the Archbishop, and then, ever gay and courageous, she rode on her way, only attended by Potet, the trusty guide Marcillac had sent her. She crossed the Pyrenees, a wild and dangerous ride, even at that time of the year. With every fresh league of distance from Paris, her spirits rose and her fears lessened. The women she met fell in love with her; the men helped her on her way. In a certain valley, close to the Spanish frontier, she met a gentleman who was on guard there, and who might have detained her in the very sight of safety. He had seen her in Paris, and he told the handsome traveller that, but for his dress, he would have sworn Madame de Chevreuse was riding by. She answered him gaily that being a near relation of the Duchess, the likeness was not to be marvelled at. They parted with all kinds of courtesies, and half an hour later her dangers were over for the time: she was safe on Spanish soil, where a friend of the Queen, an enemy of Richelieu, the most famous beauty of her day, was sure of welcome.

No sooner had she reached the frontier, than she wrote to the friendly gentleman on guard among the mountains, told him that he had not been mistaken, for she was indeed Madame de Chevreuse, thanked him for his "extraordinary

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civility," and begged him to send her a supply of clothes suitable to her sex and condition "*avant de passer outre.*"

So ended the famous ride which was the great subject of talk in that day, and which has been the foundation of many romances.

It will be amusing to return for a moment to the Château de Verteuil, where Madame de Chevreuse, as her way was, had caused great flutterings. The Prince de Marcillac, it seems, had been obliged to account to his mother for the sudden departure of the coach. He told her no fable about a duellist. Madame de Chevreuse, he said, passing by Ruffec, had asked for a coach to convey her to Saintes on private business. On her return, she would have the pleasure of paying a visit to Madame la Duchesse de la Rochefoucauld. Whether all this was Marcillac's own invention, or whether Madame de Chevreuse had written him a second letter to that effect, does not seem clear. That he was uneasy in his mind as to the lady's intentions is shown by a prudent letter he wrote to his secretary in Paris. Here he tells the same story, evidently with the object of keeping himself on the safe side, in case, the coach having travelled towards Bordeaux and not towards Saintes, the affair should be thought of any consequence.

Madame de la Rochefoucauld was not delighted at the prospect of this "*visite de haut appareil.*" Madame de Chevreuse was an embarrassing guest. But she prepared to show all proper hospitality, and the return of the empty coach, though in one way a relief, made her not a little uneasy. Why had Madame de Chevreuse driven south instead of west? Where was she going? What did it mean? The doings of such a personage, with whom intrigue, social and political, was as natural as the air she breathed, were inevitably suspicious. If anything was wrong, her borrowing the La Rochefoucauld coach might have serious consequences for its owners, even though they ranked next to the blood royal. The Duchess felt it necessary to write the whole affair to her husband in Paris, excusing her-

self and her son while she put the Duke on his guard. She sent the letter by an express messenger, as safer than the ordinary post. The straightforward ease of this letter is worthy of a great writer's mother—she was a Liancourt—and proves that women could say what they meant when Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, afterwards Marquise de Sévigné, was only eleven years old.

“ . . . You will judge better than I if the thing is of consequence. Whether it is or not, I wish she had gone any way but this, or that Ruffec was not near Verteuil, for any one cleverer than I am would have been deceived. Though I only knew she had asked for the coach after it had started, I should have sent it just the same if she had asked me, thinking, as my son did, that the civility could not be refused and would matter to no one, and knowing very well that she and her husband have plenty of private affairs of their own. . . . ”

It is fairly certain that Marcillac knew what he was doing, though his mother did not. In spite of these letters, the reports that reached the Cardinal went a good deal further than a borrowed coach. It was said that he had gone to meet Madame de Chevreuse, had entertained her at one of his houses, had given her every mark of devotion short of flying with her into Spain. As a fact, she had entrusted her jewellery, worth two hundred thousand crowns, to his care. He was to return it if they ever met again, or keep it as a gift if she died.

The affair did not end without a good deal of trouble and fuss. A formal inquiry was held that autumn by the Cardinal's agent, President Vignier, both at Tours and Verteuil. Richelieu was not, however, bent on punishing either Madame de Chevreuse or her friends very severely. By way of warning him to help no more duellists or disguised heroines, young Marcillac was sent to the Bastille. But only for a week; and the King gave special orders to M. du Tremblay, the governor—who was the brother, by the by, of Père Joseph, the *éminence grise*—that M. de Marcillac should

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be lodged and treated well, with liberty to walk on the terrace.

Meanwhile, Madame de Chevreuse, having been made much of at the Spanish Court, proceeded to England, and was most cordially received there by her old acquaintances, Charles I and Henrietta Maria. Their favour enabled her to negotiate with Richelieu her return to France and the restoration of her property. But he was inexorable; and even Anne of Austria, when better days dawned for her, was not very true to her dangerous old friend. Madame de Chevreuse remained in exile six years longer, a sharp thorn in the side of the French Government, till after both Richelieu and Louis XIII were dead.

Mademoiselle was slightly entangled in the fringe of the Val-de-Grâce affair, and that at its most thrilling moment. When she began her country progress that summer, driving out into the land of windmills and village spires and distant woods that lay round Paris, one of her first visits was paid to Chantilly, where the King and Queen were staying, and where Anne of Austria had just gone through the painful experience of being examined by Chancellor Seguier and the Cardinal as to her correspondence with Spain.

Chantilly was in those days a place of sad associations, though such changes of fortune were too common to make any deep impression on the Court. A very few years before, it had been the palace of the Montmorencys, where Henry, the last Duke, the victim of Gaston d'Orléans and Richelieu, had lived splendidly with his Roman wife, Maria Felice Orsini. The forests and avenues and terraces still echoed to the name of "Sylvie," under which Théophile de Viau, the poet whose life she had protected and reformed, sang of the good and unhappy Duchess. After the Duke's tragic death, Chantilly, confiscated to the Crown, was given by Louis XIII to his brother-in-law the Prince de Condé, who had not attempted to save him, though his great influence might probably have done so. Down to the great Revolution, Chantilly was "the Versailles of the Princes of Condé."

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Louis XIII, with all the Court, had honoured and admired the Duchesse de Montmorency. He had written a little poem to her with his own hand :—

Je vois ta renommée
Semée
Déjà bien loin d'icy,
D'un chacun estimée,
Sage Montmorency.

Now truly "bien loin d'icy," the noble Duchess, whose very presence had been a check on gossip and malignity, had retired in her deep disgrace to a convent at Moulins, where she was to spend the rest of her life in mourning her young husband, and where the stately monument she raised to him keeps their memory alive to this day.

Mademoiselle found things very dismal at Chantilly. Being a lively and irrepressible princess, however, with a conviction that her amusement was the world's first duty, she soon changed all that. "Je mis toute la cour en belle humeur." The King was glad to forget his suspicions and grievances for a few days in entertaining her, and the cloudy faces of the courtiers cleared up.

The Queen was in bed, ill with anger and mortification. The arrival of Mademoiselle, restless and noisy, was no particular pleasure to her, but she was extremely glad to see Madame de Saint-Georges, and their talks were long and confidential. Anne of Austria opened her whole heart to this old friend of the Royal Family. But it was necessary that none of her ladies, responsible to the King, should know of this consolation. Mademoiselle was therefore obliged to sit in the room while they talked. No one, the Queen thought, would suspect her of discussing such affairs in the presence of a child.

Mademoiselle, amusing herself as best she could during these important hours, made a promise of secrecy, and wisely thought that the best means of keeping it would be to forget everything she heard. She carried out this plan so effectually as to regret, when in after-years she came to write

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her Memoirs, having forgotten a good many curious things which no one but she and her governess, probably, had ever heard or known.

Madame de Saint-Georges felt the danger of these royal confidences in the very heart of the storm and under the shadow of Richelieu. She conveyed Mademoiselle back to Paris as soon as possible, and started with her on a longer journey, to visit Monsieur on the borders of Touraine.

CHAPTER IV

1637

“Et toujours apparaissaient de riants châteaux, des villages suspendus, or quelques routes bordées de peupliers majestueux ; enfin la Loire et ses longues nappes diamantées reluisirent au milieu de ses sables dorés. Séductions sans fin !”

MADemoisELLE IN TOURAINE—CHAMPIGNY AND RICHELIEU—THE DUCHESS D'AIGUILLON AND HER FRIENDS — FONTEVRAULT AND MADAME JEANNE-BAPTISTE DE BOURBON—A WINTER OF HOPE

NO difficulties as to travelling lay in wait for Mademoiselle in the first of her many progresses about her grandfather's kingdom. The *route royale* into Touraine and the west was really a good road, and had borne its character for centuries. Kings of France, from very early times down to Henry IV, had made homes in these provinces, which they loved better than the neighbourhood of fierce and restless Paris. The “garden of France,” “the afternoon-land of idleness and laughter,” with its parks and forests, its ever-green meadows and the broad mirror of its blue and silver Loire, had been literally the happy hunting-ground of all the most brilliant personages in France, till near the end of the sixteenth century. The badges and devices of Francis I and of Henry II were everywhere, on the stately walls of cream-coloured stone, over the beautiful windows and archways of the châteaux built or restored by them. Each interior was a picture gallery of themselves and their courts. And it was not only the royal castles and palaces that gave splendour and civilisation to Touraine and its borders, for all this part of France was full of the country-houses of great nobles and great statesmen.

At this time Touraine had lost a good deal of its regal glory ; most of that had passed with the Valois. Gaston

d'Orléans, neither prince nor sportsman in the old sense, was a poor substitute for the Royalties of a hundred years before. But the charm and delightfulness, the old spirit of Touraine, still lived. And Gaston, whatever his faults, was able to appreciate its atmosphere and its traditions better, possibly, than many a better man.

Mademoiselle travelled in her large leathern coach drawn by four or six horses, with the glass windows not long introduced. Such a coach would hold six or eight persons inside, their places being strictly settled by etiquette, and four or six servants outside. An armed escort protected the coach and the convoy of carts and pack-mules which followed with the baggage, including Mademoiselle's bed and other furniture.

Chief among the suite, after Madame de Saint-Georges, were Mademoiselle de Saint-Louis and Mademoiselle de Beaumont, both women of character and energy. At Chantilly, the little Princess had taken an immense fancy to Mademoiselle de Saint-Louis, who was one of the Queen's maids of honour and related to Madame de Saint-Georges. She begged so hard that the Queen allowed her to carry her favourite away. Mademoiselle de Beaumont was an impetuous person, afraid of nothing and nobody, whose frank opposition to Cardinal Mazarin cost her the Queen's favour later on. She had had a certain training in England a dozen years before, as one of Henrietta Maria's ladies, and their very rude and violent expulsion had made a bond between her and Madame de Saint-Georges, who had gone through the same experience.

Monsieur sent officers of his household to meet his little daughter at Pithiviers, and she made her journey by short stages, sleeping at various châteaux by the way, to Chambord, where he was waiting to receive her.

Chambord in its gorgeous youth—it was built by Francis I in 1526 and following years, on the site of a feudal castle of the Counts of Blois—had attractions quite lost by the dismal, rococo, ponderous old pile we see now. Like the

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fantastic palace of a dream, its immense towers, its hundreds of fanciful pinnacles and chimneys, its shining grey roofs and gilded vanes, were approached by a long avenue through a vast park or forest several leagues round, where the Valois kings had hunted wolf and wild boar. Above this forest, sweeping like the wind through the clouds, the cry of a pack of hounds and the horn of their ghostly huntsman were heard—are heard still—on winter nights. When the château belonged to Gaston d'Orléans, the foundations of its towers were still surrounded by a broad moat, with arches and open balustrades and a bridge guarded by stone lions. All this was improved away in later years, but must have given Chambord the touch of enchantment which is lacking to it now. It was a glorious place in the liquid deep blue air of late summer weather, when the little Princess, very conscious of her own dignity, pleased with the ceremony that attended her, arrived with her train at the stately entrance under the centre lantern.

Gaston had his redeeming points, though it is hard to find an historian or a novelist who will allow their existence. The best of them, perhaps, was that boyish good nature which also belonged to his brother Louis, though in his case generally smothered in clouds of dark temper and suspiciousness. Gaston's lightness of spirit, his talent for amusing himself and other people, seems to have died out of him as middle age advanced, and after Madame Marguerite resumed her lawful and lifelong empire. But at this time, whatever modern writers may say, he could be delightful, and his daughter found him so.

Chambord has thirteen great staircases; of which the greatest, the famous one, is made of two spiral flights winding round a centre pillar; so contrived that two persons can go up or down without meeting each other, from the ground floor to the lofty lantern which commands the whole wonderful roof, to say nothing of the surrounding country. On each story the staircase opens on four large halls. In one of these, by the by, then arranged as a theatre, Louis XIV watched

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the first performances of *M. de Pourceaugnac* and *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*.

On this summer day of 1637, Monsieur and Mademoiselle played a grand game up and down the staircase of Chambord. When she arrived, he was at the top; she ran up, he ran down. There were screams of laughter. Mademoiselle was enchanted with the difficulty of catching her father, and still more enchanted when she had caught him. They were the best friends in the world.

Chambord at this time, however, was only a playground. Monsieur was living at the Château de Blois, which became, in fact, his country home for the rest of his life, and here Mademoiselle and her suite paid him a long visit. She was received with royal honours by the stately little town on the Loire, and reigned like a young Queen at the castle. Outwardly, though full of stir and magnificence and gaiety, the building was much the same as it is now: the red cloister of Louis XII, the gorgeous creamy wing of François I, with its wealth of carving, his salamander everywhere; the beautiful open staircase, light as lace and strong as iron, the labyrinth of rooms with their deep windows and terrible echoes of struggle and murder. There was a noise of masons and carpenters in the great court, for Mansard, under Gaston's orders, was at this time employed in rebuilding the wing opposite the entrance. It is said that Gaston meant to rebuild the whole castle in the stiff taste of his own day, but mercifully this plan came to nothing; rather from want of money than of time. He made a beautiful garden behind his new wing, where he cultivated for his amusement all kinds of curious plants and simples.

The fair-haired Princess went romping over the castle high and low. Always something of a tomboy, active games were her passion, and her father willingly spent his time in playing with her. The favourite game was battledore and shuttlecock, and they played matches which Mademoiselle generally won. Then the shops of Blois were ransacked for prizes—watches, trinkets, anything that Her Royal Highness would accept.



THE CHÂTEAU DE BLOIS, WING BUILT BY GASTON D'ORLÉANS



All the people of quality who lived within reasonable distance of Blois came riding and driving in to pay their respects to Mademoiselle. Among these was her half-uncle, César Duc de Vendôme, who, more fortunate than his brother, the Grand Prieur, had escaped with his life from Vincennes after the *affaire* Chalais. He had been an exile from Court ever since, living partly at the beautiful Château of Chenonceaux, which was given to his wife, Françoise de Lorraine, daughter of the Duc de Mercœur, by her aunt, Queen Louise de Lorraine, the gentle and saintly widow of Henry III of France. The Duc de Vendôme was a doubtful character, according to his contemporaries—"un homme d'esprit sans réputation, sans bonté et sans fidélité." But he and his two sons, Louis Duc de Mercœur and François Duc de Beaufort, were among the chief of those great nobles whom Richelieu could never really crush, though Mercœur, in later years, resigned himself to an alliance with Mazarin. His daughter, who afterwards married the unlucky Charles Amédée Duc de Nemours, was allowed, after the first time, to visit Mademoiselle at Blois without her mother. Mademoiselle thought this incorrect. But Madame de Vendôme was a devout person of rather recluse habits, and did not find it necessary to pay more than one visit of ceremony to Monsieur and his daughter. His Court had not then attained the "chilling respectability" of later years.

Mademoiselle found her Vendôme cousins very agreeable, especially M. de Beaufort, and visited Chenonceaux more than once during her stay in Touraine. Beautiful Chenonceaux, the most enchanting and romantic of all the famous châteaux of the west, was hardly appreciated by Mademoiselle. It was of course in the taste of a past century—not so long past as to have come back into fashion. No doubt she admired her father's new wing at Blois. Chenonceaux, white and grey, smiling in the sunshine, with its graceful windows, and all its turrets and chimney-tops crowned with a gilded flourish of vanes, its feet bathed in the bright ripples of the Cher—Chenonceaux like an enchanter's palace, a little evil

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and very luxurious in the midst of its gardens and woods—was to Mademoiselle not much more than “a most extraordinary old house.” She was delighted, however, with a magnificent supper there, at which young Beaufort acted as host. There were eight courses of twelve dishes each, and Paris itself could not have surpassed either cookery or service. Even at ten years old, true to her nation, Mademoiselle was a critic. She never admired anything not in its own way admirable. She had also, like most people in those happy days, a good appetite and a good digestion. Then, as now, Touraine was a Paradise for such.

Mademoiselle found a more spiritual kind of pleasure, of which she was not unworthy, in a visit of two days to the Château de Selles, Madame de Béthune having duly paid her respects at Blois. This château, also on the Cher, had been built by Philippe de Béthune, the younger brother of the Duc de Sully—still living, a very old man, on his estate of Villebon. Philippe, who had also been a faithful servant of the great Henry, was now seventy-six, and lived at Selles with his son Hippolyte and his wife. They were among the most cultivated people of their time. The father had been Henry’s ambassador at Rome; the son, who was born at Rome, seems to have breathed in with his native air a passion for classical learning rare among the French nobles of that day. He made it the work of his life to collect ancient manuscripts, and his collection is even now one of the treasures of the Bibliothèque Nationale.

Mademoiselle was used to finding herself an honoured guest, but there was something in her reception at Selles which she could never forget. The old man’s passionate loyalty to his master, Henry IV—who had certainly a genius, *tant bien que mal*, for making himself loved—sprang to life again at the sight of Henry’s grandchild. Mademoiselle had indeed a good deal of her grandfather, especially as to his fearless frankness and *bonhomie*. She was intensely proud of him too; and if his heroic virtues were inimitable in her eyes, so also was his clever judgment and knowledge

of men. She was ready and eager, therefore, on her side, to pay every honour to the venerable M. de Béthune. With childish delight she accepted all his compliments, as well as a number of Roman curiosities with which he presented her.

Another visit—desired, one may be sure, by neither hosts nor guest—was paid to the Château de Richelieu. Mademoiselle travelled there in state from Tours. She was conveyed down the Loire to that city in Monsieur's barge, arriving just after Madame de Chevreuse had galloped away, and she found there plenty of amusements of all kinds, including the universal *comédie*. She was also expected, in Monsieur's amazing way, to entertain at least one person who startled the propriety of Madame de Saint-Georges, easy-going as she and public opinion both were. Although Mademoiselle had even then, she tells us, a horror of vice, and needed to be assured that Louison Roger was a good girl before she would play with her, it seems likely that Madame de Saint-Georges was glad to carry off her charge into more discreet society.

Long afterwards Mademoiselle took under her protection, as a pretty boy who grew into a gallant young man, the son of that dark-eyed Louison of Tours. His mother had retired into a convent. His royal father, unlike his own father in such circumstances, quite declined all responsibility in the matter. Mademoiselle educated the boy, called him first Chevalier, then Comte de Charny, after one of her estates, and bought him commissions in the Guards and in the Régiment de la Couronne. It seems that he was the only son of Gaston d'Orléans who lived to grow up.

On the way to Richelieu, Mademoiselle visited Champigny—afterwards the scene of Madame de la Fayette's romance, *La Princesse de Montpensier*—which had belonged to her ancestors. She had been robbed of this estate, with the pretext of an exchange, by Cardinal de Richelieu, on whose lands it bordered. Gaston d'Orléans, her guardian, was too weak to resist him. At the time this happened Mademoiselle was not old enough to make her voice heard, but now

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and ever after, till she at length succeeded in recovering her property, she strongly resented the tyrannical bargain. The splendid old house of the Dukes of Montpensier had been demolished, and was gone for ever, but the chapel in which they were buried, with its desecrated tombs and its fine stained glass, stands to this day. It was not spared by any wish of the Cardinal, but through the fortunately good memory of Pope Urban VIII. He was asked to consent to its destruction. It was so ruinous, the Cardinal assured him, that Mass could no longer be said there. But Urban remembered the former days of Champigny and its illustrious owners. He even remembered, when Nuncio in France, having said Mass there, and he refused to allow the chapel to be pulled down. Richelieu was very angry, but even he could not disobey the Pope. So it was left for the Revolution to dishonour the tombs of the Montpensiers and to deface their ancient coats of arms.

Mademoiselle, praying in the chapel for her ancestors' souls, was beset by a crowd of the villagers of Champigny. Her grandfather, Duke Henry, had loaded them with kindness; they had not forgotten him, though he had been thirty years dead, and they came with loud crying and tears and shouts of welcome to greet the child who ought to have been their liege lady. It was a poor change for them to be under the rule of a Richelieu. These good peasants, no doubt, had all the scorn in the world for the upstart Cardinal. He was not a prophet in his own country. He had not even been born there. The Du Plessis, to whom his father belonged, were people of old family in the country, but they were not great nobles; they were many degrees below the rank of a Montpensier, though his grandfather had made a fine match by marrying a Rochechouart. And now he posed as—what he was, after all—the first man in France. Even the King had to bow before Armand du Plessis, Cardinal-Duc de Richelieu. But the people of Champigny kept their old faith. Their village had been absorbed by its gorgeous neighbour; they remained loyal to the heiress of their ancient



Rowley

THE CHAPEL AT CHAMPIGNY

lords, Mademoiselle. And she, who never forgot an old friend, did not rest till Champigny was her own again.

All this—Mademoiselle's devotions at the tombs of her ancestors, and the people's love for her—was not pleasing to the great lady who now reigned at Richelieu. The Duchesse d'Aiguillon had driven over to Champigny to meet her young royal guest, and found herself in the midst of an excited, dark-faced crowd whose shouts were not for her. She hurried Mademoiselle away as soon as possible from her former vassals and carried her off to the little town and vast château of Richelieu. They drove through a woody, lonely country, with chalk hills and scrambling vines and walnut trees everywhere, just as one may see them now. The peasants, gathering in their crops, shaded their eyes from the low sunlight to see the last Montpensier passing in her coach, escorted by the Cardinal's niece, surrounded by the Cardinal's liveries. They pranced along the road from Chinon to Châtellerault—the only way of approach to Richelieu—and forded the river Mable at the very place where, fifty or sixty years before, François du Plessis, father of the Cardinal, had lain in wait for his neighbour, the Sieur de Mausson, and murdered him, in revenge for the death of his own elder brother at Mausson's hands.

Mademoiselle was very finely received at her godfather's castle. It was dark when she arrived, for September evenings, down there, are as short as they are lovely. The little town, built by the Cardinal on the site of an old tumble-down village, was lit up, as well as the castle, with coloured lanterns. Mademoiselle found the effect most agreeable. The château—destroyed a hundred years ago—was royal in its size and magnificence. Europe had been ransacked to ornament it with statues, bronzes, paintings, tapestries, and gorgeous furniture. It was regarded as one of the wonders of France. Its courts and terraces, domes and pavilions, had all grown up in a marvellous way round about the feudal manor which had come down to the Du Plessis, through a marriage into the old family of Clérembault, about the time

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of Charles VII. The Cardinal had vexed his architect by forbidding him to pull down the old rooms that his father and mother had lived in; a pleasant trait in "le plus ambitieux et le plus glorieux homme du monde"; but the consequence was that the interior of the château hardly corresponded in grandeur with the exterior. It was all splendid enough, however. Mademoiselle was especially struck with Michelangelo's two marble Slaves, standing at the top of the great staircase on a balcony commanding the courtyard. These statues, now at the Louvre, had been presented by the sculptor to Strozzi, the great collector, and by him to Francis I, who gave them to the Constable de Montmorency. In the ruin of that house they had come into the Cardinal's possession.

Mademoiselle and her suite were a good deal amused by the manners and customs of Madame d'Aiguillon and the ladies staying with her at Richelieu. These were Madame du Vigean, her devoted friend—mother of that lovely Marthe du Vigean who bewitched the great Condé later on—and the already famous Mademoiselle de Rambouillet, Julie d'Angennes, the flower of the *Précieuses*, the flattered heroine of the poets who haunted her mother's sacred Blue Room at the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Julie d'Angennes was at this time thirty, and it was not till eight years later that she married the Marquis de Montausier, who had been in love with her for thirteen years. Even now, popular and charming, she was a leading figure in the intelligent, the cultured, the more refined half of society, whose influence, becoming fashionable in spite of certain great ladies like Madame de Chevreuse, was fast softening manners as a whole. Madame d'Aiguillon, a very powerful person during her uncle's lifetime, hovering between the Carmelites and a world in which she could not reign as despotically as she wished, had a rather half-hearted respect for the Hôtel de Rambouillet, though she tenderly loved Mademoiselle Julie. Letters were all very well, and to some extent a means of distinction. She preferred either the cloister and its fame of

pure devotion or a life of politics and lucrative governments. She was a clever woman who could not live without friendship, so far as it meant flattery. At this time she and Madame du Vigean were inseparable.

If Mademoiselle herself was not particularly welcome to the three ladies at Richelieu, still less so was one member at least of her suite. Madame d'Aiguillon was furious, Madame du Vigean was embarrassed: her husband, the Baron du Vigean, one of Monsieur's courtiers, had the bad taste to intrude on his wife's peaceful and friendly little idyl. The fuss was prodigious. Mademoiselle, even at her age, found it very amusing, and enjoyed the joke privately with her own ladies. They were all, even Madame de Saint-Georges, in fits of laughter, Mademoiselle having been called to account by Madame d'Aiguillon for her indiscretion in bringing this gentleman to Richelieu. Mademoiselle, always a Princess, answered politely, but was not repentant or meek. In truth M. du Vigean, for his own ends, had added himself without leave to the party. He had attached himself to Monsieur's secretary, and travelled in his coach. Another hanger-on, a young man who in those days was glad to eat at the secretary's table, was that handsome Chabot who in after years married the heiress, Mademoiselle de Rohan, and as Duc de Rohan-Chabot took a very high place in society.

Two days at Richelieu were enough for Mademoiselle and for her hostess. The whole party started together to drive to Fontevault, where Mademoiselle was to visit her half-aunt, the Abbess, Madame Jeanne-Baptiste de Bourbon. Madame d'Aiguillon, with her friends, felt bound to escort the little Princess on her way, but their sense of duty only carried them as far as the stopping-place where the party breakfasted.

A little scene here was watched by Mademoiselle and her ladies with unkind amusement. Madame d'Aiguillon changes colour suddenly. The weather was probably hot; the boredom of the situation was too much for a nervous woman, accustomed to be petted and worshipped, tired of making

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reverences to a rather haughty, quick-witted royal minx of ten years old.

Madame du Vigean flies to her friend's side, feels her pulse. "My dear, you are ill; you are feverish!" For half an hour, Mademoiselle asserts, these ladies entertain each other with "*discours patelins*." The complaining, coaxing, flattering, brings about the desired end. Mademoiselle begs the Duchesse not to take the trouble of coming any further. She presses it so earnestly that Madame d'Aiguillon is persuaded. She, with her devoted friends, drives back to Richelieu, and Mademoiselle realises the joy of that drive. She herself is quite as much pleased and relieved as Madame d'Aiguillon. "*Toute cette comédie*," she says, "*nous fit gagner gaiement Fontevrault*."

Fontevrault is desolate enough now. Even sadder in its doom than other great French abbeys, more than a hundred years have passed since its glory departed. The Plantagenet tombs are there still, witnessing to the times when Henry II was carried from Chinon, by the Pont des Nonnains he built over the Vienne, and when the great Richard was brought from Chaluz to the chief sanctuary of Anjou, and when Eleanor of Aquitaine ended her stormy life there as a cloistered nun. But except the bare framework of the desecrated church, and the old refectory with its portraits of the thirty-six abbesses from 1100 to the Revolution, and certain white crumbling walls covered with ivy and roses, and the ever-living landscape of remote France, glowing vineyard, oak and walnut and chestnut shade, grey poplars rustling, goats climbing the roadside banks and dark-faced peasant children watching them, or an old woman, very thin and brown, spinning with a distaff—except these things, the little-noticed background of centuries, all the life of the great Abbey has disappeared as if it had never been. It has faded into the life of a modern prison.

In Mademoiselle's days Fontevrault was one of the most famous and splendid abbeys of France. The abbesses were very great ladies, generally of royal blood, and of necessity

clever and wise, for by the founder's statutes they ruled communities of men as well as of women, not only in the mother house, but scattered through France, England, and Spain. The Abbey was also a school for princesses and girls of high birth; down to its extinction, daughters of France were educated there. And though the mixture of religion and the world could not be always edifying, a generally high standard was kept at Fontevrault through seven hundred years.

Madame Jeanne-Baptiste de Bourbon, the daughter of Henry IV and Charlotte des Essarts, was by no means the least distinguished in the long line of abbesses, though neither a religious reformer like her predecessors, Marie de Bretagne and Renée de Bourbon, nor a brilliant and learned lady like her successor, Gabrielle de Rochechouart-Mortemart, sister of Madame de Montespan. She spent years in unsuccessful efforts for the canonisation of the founder, Robert d'Arbrissel, and she had long struggles with her rebellious monks, who kicked against the authority of a woman, as they had often done before, and not unnaturally. This affair ended in the submission of the monks, for Madame, besides being a person of much sweetness and charm, had the weight of tradition and authority behind her. And with all her lively gentleness, no one could forget that she was of the royal blood of France, "*et du plus chaud.*" Known originally as Mademoiselle de Romorantin, and made Abbess of Fontevrault at seventeen, Jeanne-Baptiste was perhaps the best and the most attractive of Henry's various children. She was on affectionate terms with her half-brothers and sisters, especially with Louis XIII and Henrietta Maria of England. It may have been her ruling presence at Fontevrault which drew her brother, the Comte de Moret, as tradition says, to his hermitage at Gardelles.

Gaily then, with rumbling of coach-wheels, trampling of horses, a mighty cracking of whips and jingling of bells, Mademoiselle and her escort came dashing out of the country roads into the white paved square before the Abbey gates. She was received with great respect and honour. Being a

royal visitor, the gentlemen of her suite had a right to enter the Abbey, and the scene in those old courts was lively enough. It was sunset; the bright light, the marvellously clear air of Anjou, made the whole picture like a middle-age illumination. Mademoiselle tells us of the excitement of the nuns, who crowded round her in eager welcome. The demonstrations of "ces bonnes filles" in their white habits rather bored the little Princess, who never but once—and that was later—felt any inclination towards a convent life. She is slightly scornful of the "raison de la parenté" which brought the nuns to her feet as "la nièce de Madame." By Madame herself she was "accablée de caresses."

Then the whole company was swept into the church for a *Te Deum* and other ceremonies, and by the time all this was over, to Mademoiselle's vexation, the swift twilight had descended and it was nearly dark. Not too dark, however, for the evening's amusement in hope of which Mademoiselle had come to Fontevrault, and which had filled her thoughts, she frankly confesses, through all the solemn singing in the Grand Moustier. Rumour said that one of the nuns had gone mad. The sight of this unhappy *folle* would be worth that of all the treasures of the Abbey, many and magnificent, sacred relics, gorgeous plate and jewellery, rare lace, precious manuscripts.

It so happened that Mesdemoiselles de Beaumont and de Saint-Louis, frivolous-minded or wishing for fresh air, slipped away from the duty of attending their mistress at church and strolled round the various courts of the Abbey. They had not gone far when they heard horrible screams. Mademoiselle de Beaumont wanted to run away. Mademoiselle de Saint-Louis, more adventurous, insisted on finding out what the noise meant. A dungeon grating, nearly level with the ground, showed them the head of the wretched lunatic they had heard of. As the poor creature, screaming, leaped at her prison bars, they saw that she was naked. Her "extravagance" delighted them so much, they were so immensely amused, that after watching her for some time

they hurried back towards the church. Mademoiselle must not miss such a rare spectacle. The child tore herself away from her reverend aunt—who smiled indulgently, no doubt, being “*excessivement bonne et douce*”—and spent the rest of the evening, till supper-time, in laughing at the antics of that poor mad nun.

This, unfortunately, was the one really exciting attraction that the Abbey had to offer. The sane nuns were tiresome, the cooking was bad, and Madame could not persuade her wilful niece to stay more than two days in the house where so many royal personages had delighted to linger.

Hunting, dancing, games, *comédie*, *collations*, at many different castles and abbeys of Anjou and Touraine, weeks of delightful entertainment in Monsieur's company at Tours, Blois, Amboise; with all this the autumn slipped happily away. At Amboise on the 3rd of November was celebrated the *Saint-Hubert*, the old hunting festival of France. After this the weather became cold and wintry, and Mademoiselle, not without tears, had to leave her agreeable father and set out on her journey back to Paris.

Arrived there, her first duty was to visit the King and Queen at Saint-Germain. Their Majesties, who were both in a particularly good humour, received her with affectionate caresses, and each accepted with joy an enamelled watch of the latest fashion, which she had brought from Blois. The King's watch, dark blue and very small, must have been a gem of its kind.

This was the beginning of a very agreeable winter for Mademoiselle and the whole Court. There was a brightness of dawn in the sky. Everybody was waiting, at last in hope not to be disappointed, for the rising of the sun.

“*Vous serez ma belle-fille!*” said Anne of Austria to the young niece who shared frankly in the excitement and joy of her elders.

The poor Queen, at last, was too happy not to talk nonsense, or to be in less than charity with all the world. The sincere gladness of Gaston's little daughter touched her

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heart, for Gaston would be the one person injured by a prince's birth. Not unnaturally, a fancy of compensation came to her, and Mademoiselle, not unnaturally, took the words in earnest.

Cardinal de Richelieu was already frowning on this young ambition, which lived long enough to die under the cannon of the Fronde.

CHAPTER V

1638-1642

"Il est passé, il a plié bagage
Ce cardinal, dont c'est moult grand dommage
Pour sa maison : c'est comme je l'entends ;
Car pour autrui, maints hommes sont contents,
En bonne foi, de n'en voir que l'image.

Or parlerons sans crainte d'être en cage ;
Il est en plomb l'éminent personnage
Qui de nos maux a ri plus de vingt ans. . .
Il est passé."

MADemoisELLE DE HAUTEFORT—ROYAL SPORT—"MON PETIT MARI"—THE STORY OF CINQ-MARS—THE DEATH OF RICHELIEU.

THOSE were the days when Mademoiselle de Hautefort, the beautiful fair girl, Anne of Austria's most loyal confidante, who dared Richelieu's anger for her in the Val-de-Grâce affair, stood almost higher in the King's affections than his horses and his dogs.

Two of the Queen's ladies, both loyal to their mistress—she too indifferent to be jealous—both hating and hated by the Cardinal, reigned long in turn over the queer heart of Louis XIII. Sometimes it was Marie de Hautefort's blue-eyed brilliancy, sometimes the gentle saintliness, the dark, soft, twilight beauty of Louise de la Fayette. This last was the only woman, probably, who ever had any real and deep influence with the King. His love for her was an affectionate and confiding friendship, and she loved him tenderly for himself. It was the love of friends, or of a brother and sister : so much the more alarming to Richelieu, who never rested till he had driven Mademoiselle de la Fayette into the Convent of Sainte Marie de Chaillot, where she died Superior after many years.

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There was no sentiment in Mademoiselle de Hautefort's flirtations with Louis. She dazzled and fascinated him. She did her best, hard as it was, to strike a spark of passion or even manhood out of the shyest of princes. She tormented him as far as his dignity would allow, while the Queen and the Court laughed in the background. In company, Louis did his best to hide his immense admiration for Mademoiselle de Hautefort; alone, he made songs in her honour, which were sung at the Queen's evening concerts, three times a week, to music of his composition. Very often they quarrelled, for Mademoiselle de Hautefort was plain-spoken. Then he spent solitary hours in writing out all their talks and arguments. At such times his company was more unpleasant than usual; even in the Queen's rooms, he would sit sulking and yawning in a corner, speaking to nobody, nobody daring to speak to him. All amusements ceased, and a chill melancholy reigned, till the *brouillerie* had passed over.

When Mademoiselle de Hautefort was amiable and the King was happy, his hunting parties that winter were delightful. Mademoiselle de Hautefort rode as the central figure in a brilliant group of the Queen's ladies, among whom were her young sister Mademoiselle d'Escars, Mademoiselle de Chemerault—sent away from Court later on because of a love affair with the famous Cinq-Mars, and also unenviably known as a spy of Richelieu's—Mesdemoiselles de Beaumont and de Saint-Louis, and last but by no means least, the little Princess of Orléans, the ten-year-old Mademoiselle. Dressed in bright colours, with feathered hats, riding fine horses richly caparisoned, this gay party rode after the King and his hounds, at a swinging pace, through the long glades of the forests that echoed with horns and shouting. The hunt, cleverly managed, always led in the direction of some house or castle, where the royal party found refreshments, and the King, like a simple gentleman, waited on the ladies. One of the favourite haunts was Versailles, where on the top of a hill crowned with a windmill Louis had built a small hunting château some years before.

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When chase and banquet were over, the King drove back to Saint-Germain in Mademoiselle's coach, sitting between her and Mademoiselle de Hautefort and entertaining them with stories of horses and dogs and birds. Sometimes, too, when in a specially good humour, he allowed them to chatter freely on even so dangerous a subject as the Cardinal, whose social tyranny he resented quite as much as they did, though a mixture of moral weakness and political sense kept him silent in the matter.

Long after, Mademoiselle remembered those hunting days among the brightest of her childhood. She always spoke with affection of her curious uncle, whose kindness to her never failed, though a strange face among her young companions was enough to frighten and displease him. For instance, when the Princesse de Condé and the Duchesse de Vendôme brought their daughters to Saint-Germain—where the Court spent that winter and spring—etiquette demanding that Mademoiselle should entertain these two young girls, the King shrank away from his niece's company in an access of awkward shyness, as if he had been a countryman just come to Court. "*C'est une assez mauvaise qualité pour un grand roi, et particulièrement en France,*" says Mademoiselle, with her usual good sense and frankness.

The Dauphin, afterwards Louis XIV, was born at Saint-Germain on September 5th, 1638, and was welcomed by Mademoiselle, in fine possessive fashion, as "*mon petit mari.*" Her godfather the Cardinal did more than frown upon her; he at once clipped her soaring wings by ordering her back to Paris, with a good scolding into the bargain. She, who already saw herself Queen of France, was furiously angry. The King and Queen let her go, not without regret. The Queen tried laughingly to comfort her: "*My son is really too small! You shall marry my brother.*" But neither King nor Queen had power enough, in the face of Richelieu's stern disapproval, to keep the child to play with her baby cousin at Saint-Germain. During the next three or four years she lived almost entirely in Paris,

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visiting the Court not more than half a dozen times a year.

By the time she was fourteen she had gravely considered two possible marriages, and was not too sorry that both came to nothing, the little royal husband still holding his place in the background of her heart. Marriage or no marriage, she had always a special tenderness for Louis, Dauphin and King; the passion of her childhood, lingering on into grown-up life, was not all ambition. Apart from him, and from the one miserable love-affair of her later life, the idea of marriage, for her, was never at all touched with sentiment. She had a great and tolerably just idea of her own importance, and it was difficult to offer her a match that she considered worthy.

Her first lover was a Prince of the royal blood, Louis de Bourbon, Comte de Soissons, whose father, Charles de Bourbon, was a son of the first Prince de Condé, the Huguenot hero, by his second marriage with Françoise-Marie d'Orléans-Longueville. As a boy of five years old, Henry IV had promised Prince Louis the hand of his youngest baby daughter, Henriette Marie. But she was only a few months old when her father died; and Queen Marie de Médicis had other ambitions for her. Monsieur le Comte, as they called him, would gladly have married Gaston's first wife, the young Duchesse de Montpensier. After her death the Princes became friends, and the Comte de Soissons took up Gaston's quarrel against the King and Richelieu, but did not, like Gaston, find it necessary to submit. He was always in opposition, joining in every conspiracy, and at last, with the Ducs de Guise and de Bouillon, throwing himself into civil war with the help of Spain.

In the intervals of plotting and fighting, an exile from France, plunging deeper in the King's displeasure every day, he kept up a lively correspondence with Monsieur, as well as with Mademoiselle. Having failed to win her mother, he proposed himself as a husband for her; the fortune was the same, and would have done great things for him. Her

father was not unwilling, and she, the courtship extending over some years, with a constant tribute of sugar-plums and compliments, grew accustomed to the idea. The King's consent being out of the question, and Mademoiselle being fourteen, M. le Comte asked Monsieur's leave to run away with her. He had friends at Court who would gladly have lent a hand to the adventure; his mother and most of his relations, as well as his devoted friend Madame de Montbazon, stepmother and rival beauty of Madame de Chevreuse. But Gaston dared not consent; and M. le Comte's courtship came very soon to a tragic end: he was killed in the victorious skirmish of La Marfée, fighting against France, in the summer of 1641. The King forbade any mourning for this traitor Bourbon, but Mademoiselle paid a visit of condolence to his mother and wept secretly with her and his friends over the loss of "un fort honnête homme, doué de grandes qualités."

The Comtesse de Soissons believed that she had a supernatural warning of her son's death. As she was walking from one room to another in her château of Bagnolet, two carved palms fell from the ceiling at her feet. She was startled, but only thought of having the broken ornaments replaced. When the news came that he had died on that very day, and in the moment of victory over the King's forces, she remembered the little incident. All society talked of the fallen palms, and gave them their full meaning.

In the same year Mademoiselle lost the possible husband whom Anne of Austria had offered to her as a substitute for the Dauphin. The Infant Ferdinand of Spain, Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo, Captain-General of Flanders and Commander-in-Chief of the Spanish forces there, was an extremely handsome and brilliant little man of about thirty, the Queen's favourite brother and the flower of his family. He died of fever in the campaign against Louis XIII, but not without suspicion of being poisoned by his own people. It is said that he was planning a separate treaty with France, to give him the independent sovereignty of Flanders, and

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that one of the details of this treaty was his marriage with Mademoiselle. He was not a priest, so that this arrangement would have been quite possible, and Mademoiselle declares that the King had decided upon it.

However, these plans were cut short by tertian fever or a Spanish dose, and Louis took no pains to break the news gently to the Queen.

"Your brother is dead."

The abruptness may have hidden a touch of political regret, if nothing better. But the fact, a joy to France, that he was now the father of two Princes—Philippe, duc d'Anjou, was born two years after the Dauphin—made Louis not any more considerate or agreeable to his wife. He scolded her, with threats of taking the children away, because the little Louis, one unlucky evening, cried at the sight of His Majesty in his night-cap.

His health was growing weaker and his temper more gloomy. More and more completely, if often rebellious, soul and body were ruled by the *Éminentissime*. And yet when not following his armies in the south or east under his great Minister's orders, watching the war as it dragged along, Louis had still something of his old childishness, his love for amusements that most men scorned. Small matters of dress and personal ornament were great to him. In a way he was formal, though he could never make himself the centre and rule of Court etiquette, as his son did.

One may fancy Louis XIII standing stiff and upright, the fingers of his left hand resting on a table where his black plumed hat lies. His handsome aquiline face is pale and melancholy. His dark brown hair, parted in the middle, falls smooth over his ears and curls round his neck. His right arm is hidden by a short purple cloak lined with white satin and deeply bordered with gold; under this his shirt of white cambric and lace shows through the slashes and openings of a pale pink jacket with deep lace collar and cuffs. The jewelled cross of the royal order of the *Saint-Esprit* hangs from the broad blue ribbon on his breast. His wide breeches



HENRI D'EFFIAT, MARQUIS DE CINQ-MARS
FROM AN ENGRAVING BY LANGLOIS

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reaching to the knee, where the loose black boots, their tops filled with lace, almost meet them, are striped red and yellow. He wears a slight curled moustache and a little tuft on his chin; this last fashion, which became so general, was of his own invention.

He might be seen standing at a window, as his way was, saying dreamily, "Ennuyons-nous, ennuyons-nous"; and then came the fancy for some diversion, which very often bored the Court sufficiently. One day he was taken with a passion for shaving himself and everybody else. All his officers quickly lost the beards which had been worn since Henry IV, and were left with a moustache and a *petit toupet*; this was called *la royale*, and through the middle years of the seventeenth century hardly a gentleman in France, or indeed in Europe, was to be seen without it.

Hélas, ma pauvre barbe,
Qu'est-ce qui t'a faite ainsi?
C'est le grand roi Louis,
Treizième de ce nom,
Qui toute a ébarbé sa maison.

So sang Paris in the streets as the royal officers passed by.

The bright and tragic figure of young Henry d'Effiat, Marquis de Cinq-Mars, the King's last favourite, the most widely pitied victim of Richelieu's vengeance and of Gaston's self-preserving caution, flashes like a meteor through the last years of the reign. The handsome boy of eighteen, his head a ripple of curls, his mind full of love-making and military ambition, was presented to the King by Richelieu with the intention that he should serve him as a spy. Till now, the King's favourites had been the Cardinal's enemies; but he flattered himself that he had triumphed over the last of these by driving Mademoiselle de Hautefort from the Court, already free of her rival. Unconscious of the part he was intended to play, Cinq-Mars rushed boldly into the career that the King's favour, stormy and changeable as it was, opened before him.

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He was at first made Master of the Wardrobe; then stepped from one high place to another till he was Grand Equerry—known as “M. le Grand”—and till his ambition, boundless as the life of glorious enjoyment which seemed to await his splendid youth, began to reach towards the highest offices in the kingdom, Constable of France, or even First Minister, the Cardinal's invalid detested life at an end. Everybody conspired to the spoiling of Cinq-Mars. He turned the heads of the Court beauties. Princess Marie de Gonzague, one of the three daughters of the Duke of Nevers and Mantua, thought seriously of marrying him when he should have climbed a little higher. When, on the contrary, he fell, she was obliged to beg from Madame d'Aiguillon the return of her letters. She was not, as Alfred de Vigny in his romance represents her, a girl of Henry d'Effiat's own age, but a woman eight years older, a flame of Monsieur's before his second marriage, now a little faded and disappointed, living in Paris on a small fortune, and waiting for a suitable husband. A few years later she became Queen of Poland. King Ladislas, old, fat, and gouty, offered his hand to several ladies in succession, first of all to Mademoiselle, who refused him scornfully. Poor Princess Marie, who was neither young, rich, nor great enough to despise a crown, even that of a *pays barbare*, repented heartily of her bargain.

The airs and the ambitions of Cinq-Mars enraged the Cardinal, and when he was angry, no one could speak more plainly or scold more terribly. Cinq-Mars learned, to his immense indignation, for what base uses he had been brought to Court by the great man who now threatened to crush him for disobedience and ingratitude. He resolved to measure his strength against Richelieu's and to ruin the old friend who had become his enemy. He dared all, trusting in the King's affection, and really believing, it seems, that he too would not be sorry to see the Cardinal's fall.

As to the nation, the majority of both high and low certainly hated the *Éminentissime* as an oppressor. It was him that they justly blamed, not the King, for the severe

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laws and heavy taxes which made life miserable at home, while on them were based the sovereign, centralised royal power and the foreign policy of victorious war with Spain and Austria which made France great abroad. The Queen, silent in the background, the nobles not actually dependent on Richelieu, the Princes, among whom the Duc de Vendôme had lately fled from his tyranny to England, the Parliament of Paris, whose pretensions to some independence he had mercilessly crushed—all would have gladly welcomed peace, and liberty from his iron rule.

So grew up at Court, almost with the King's knowledge—for Madame de Motteville goes so far as to say that His Majesty "en était tacitement le chef"—the last and most dangerous of all the conspiracies against Richelieu. Cinq-Mars, believing in his own star and putting his trust in princes, was its moving spirit; his chief allies were Gaston d'Orléans, eager to seize the occasion of ruining his lifelong enemy, and the Duc de Bouillon, who still held Sedan, a centre for discontented and rebellious princes.

No doubt the King was the difficulty. He might have no reason to love his Minister; he might listen to talk against him, and be amused; but no one could be quite sure that the charm of a young favourite would be strong enough finally to bear him against the tide of all his traditions. The conspirators thought to make themselves safe, therefore, by a secret treaty with Spain. The King of Spain was to send an army into France from the east, to be under the command of Monsieur, with two other *seigneurs* whose names were not mentioned in the treaty. The Duc de Bouillon would thus be enabled to hold his own, and Sedan would be a refuge for Monsieur and his friends, in case Richelieu proved too strong for them. If they succeeded in forcing on his disgrace, one article of the peace between Spain and France, immediately to follow, would be the restoration of all conquests made by the French in the war. Thus the foolish conspirators put themselves hopelessly in the wrong.

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Given the two men, Richelieu and Louis XIII, and such a pair of allies as the Duc d'Orléans and "M. le Grand," the failure of the plan was a certainty. The Cardinal's spies were equal to their reputation. Before many days had passed, the secret treaty with Spain was in his hands.

He and the King were both in Provence, both ill, their last days drawing near. Instead of disgrace, the Cardinal found triumph over all his enemies, an absolute triumph, perhaps the greatest of his life. With the proofs of high treason laid before him, Louis found himself helpless to save "the amiable criminal" who had trusted his affection so far that he had made no attempt to escape. Cinq-Mars was doomed, and all the more hopelessly because Gaston bought his own safety by a full confession, giving the names of those concerned in the treaty, and renouncing them and all their works. The Duc de Bouillon alone escaped, by surrendering Sedan to the King. Cinq-Mars, with his friend M. de Thou, several years older than himself, who had been guilty of knowing of the treaty and holding his tongue—for he said at his trial, "Il m'a cru son ami unique et fidèle, et je ne l'ai pas voulu trahir"—were left to the vengeance of the Cardinal, more powerful, by the King's special mandate, than he had ever been before.

He was at this time seriously ill, and had only a few months to live. It was impossible for him to travel in any ordinary way, and when he set out on his last long journey, a royal progress in its dignity, from the south back to Paris, he was carried by twenty-four men in an enormous litter made of wood and lined with crimson and gold. In this travelling house there was room for a table and chair, besides the "magnificent bed" where the dying Cardinal lay; thus he gave audiences, or dictated to his secretary as he was carried along. He was attended by a suite of nobles, *cardinalistes*, and by a large escort of troops. Men went before conveying loads of planks, with which they made an inclined way for carrying the litter into any house where His Eminence chose to stay. Gates of towns, not to mention

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doors and windows of houses, were generally far too small to admit the great structure ; in this case walls were pulled down to make the required entrance. It was out of the question that the Cardinal should be moved, shaken, or disturbed in any way.

He made all the first part of his journey by water, his travelling litter being placed on board a gorgeous barge to be rowed up the Rhône, while the escort accompanied him, riding on each bank of the river. On a smaller barge, following his own, his young enemies were towed to their trial at Lyons. It was a dramatic and barbarous episode. The Cardinal's cruel arrogance, in making this public boast of his triumph, made a great impression on society. Madame de Motteville, moderate and discreet, expresses the best opinion of the time.

"He fastened their boat to his own," she says, "after the same manner, but with no such glory, as the Roman Consuls when they bound to their chariot the captive kings they had conquered. This cruel action, which savoured of paganism, but of which a virtuous pagan would have been incapable, was a dishonour to his life. It showed his contempt for God's law, which forbids to a Christian not only personal revenge, but even any rejoicing over just vengeance. After thus parading his barbarous vanity as far as Lyons, he condemned them both to die upon the scaffold."

The long pathetic story of the trial and death of Cinq-Mars and François de Thou has often been told. It thrilled France at the time, for the brilliant boy of twenty-two was much better liked than favourites often are. He had many friends, and told his confessor at the last that nothing surprised him so much as to find himself forsaken by them all. Only M. de Thou, who might have saved himself, stood by him and died with him. Half France, they say, looked on and wished that the plot had been successful ; but all France, at that moment, could not have saved a victim from Richelieu. Women, by whom Cinq-Mars was universally loved, wept for him. The behaviour of both friends at their death was calm

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and noble, and they will always be remembered, it seems, rather as heroes than as traitors to their country.

One has dwelt a little on this tragedy, partly because it was the chief talk of many months in 1642, when Mademoiselle, a girl of fifteen, was fast becoming a personage at Court to be reckoned with, and partly because it had a specially painful effect upon her. It opened her eyes to her father's real character. She heard people say, and she saw for herself, that Monsieur, with a little courage and self-forgetfulness, could have saved Cinq-Mars and his friend. At least, the complete betrayal, the giving of the confederates' names, need not have been his doing. Terror of Richelieu, degraded expressions of repentance, a panic-stricken climbing to safety over the doomed heads of others—all this had been the end of every conspiracy into which Gaston had so lightly and willingly thrown himself. It makes the whole thing more despicable that the King's only brother was never in any real personal danger. His life would never have been sacrificed to Richelieu's policy.

When the King forgave Monsieur and allowed him to return to the Court, his innocent daughter expected to see him at least slightly depressed by the memory of his unlucky allies, "left on the road." Little she knew Gaston. He was gayer than ever; honour and the past were absolutely nothing to him. He supped with Mademoiselle at the Tuileries, to the music of the royal string band, and understood nothing of the wondering reproach in his daughter's eyes. Much as she still loved her delightful father, enchanted as she was to be with him again—"I confess," she says, "that I could not see him without thinking of them, and that his joyousness saddened me in the midst of my own."

The Cardinal-Duc, having crushed his enemies, was borne back triumphantly to Paris, a dying man. Even now not satisfied with the completeness of his vengeance, he spent his last weeks in driving away from the Court all those officers who were known to have been friendly with Cinq-Mars,



CARDINAL DE RICHELIEU
FROM A PORTRAIT BY PHILIPPE DE CHAMPAIGNE

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among them M. de Troisville, or Tréville, the famous Captain of Musketeers.

It seemed that the King could refuse him nothing now. From the magnificent Palais-Cardinal, where he lay dying, he directed the affairs of a future France, nominating his statesman-pupil Giulio Mazarini, the handsome, sleek Italian, to succeed himself as First Minister. His dying hand was stretched out in an edict to exclude Gaston d'Orléans from the regency, in case of the King's death, and this one, among the many commands given on his death-bed, was quickly carried out. Louis's deep distrust of his brother was not all owing to the Cardinal. Mademoiselle proposed to throw herself at the King's feet when he went in state to the Parliament for the registration of this *Déclaration du Roi contre Monsieur*, to implore him to stop short of so insulting an extremity. Louis was informed of her intention, and forbade the troublesome scene.

The *Éminentissime* was dead, and France drew a long breath of relief and rejoicing. He had always lived more magnificently than the King, and his funeral, to the satisfaction of Paris, was as splendid as his life had been. He lay in state for a week, and all the world came to gaze at the clear-cut, emaciated face. Even after his burial in the Church of the Sorbonne, Paris hardly dared to believe he was dead.

The King set his guards at the gates of the Palais-Cardinal, now, by its great owner's will, become the Palais-Royal, and went off to Saint-Germain with a few dry words of regret for the Minister who had made France feared in Europe, and had built up the system of absolute royal authority which lasted just one hundred and fifty years.

"Il est mort un grand politique."

"L'âpre et redoutable Richelieu," says his enemy Retz, "avait foudroyé plutôt que gouverné les humains."

Now all the prisoners expected to be released, the exiles hoped to be called home; society was ready, with young princes and princesses at its head, to throw itself into all

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kinds of wild gaieties. Society had to wait some months, however, as well as most of the prisoners and exiles, though a few, such as Monsieur and the Duc de Vendôme with his sons, were allowed to return to the Court. Louis still ruled his kingdom from his lingering death-bed at Saint-Germain, and though Mazarin was outwardly all gentleness, the spirit of Richelieu still governed France through these two.

Society, therefore, regarded Richelieu's death as the dawn, and looked forward to that of the King as the sunrise of its day. Those lovely hands of Anne of Austria, so long powerless, were sure to hold the reins lightly; and as to Mazarin, even if he were to be First Minister, which was thought most improbable, nobody yet feared him. The princes began by despising him. He seemed to them little more than a clever, cringing Italian adventurer.

CHAPTER VI

“ Une Ville inconnue, immense—
Paris ! . . . ”

“ Cette ville
Aux longs cris
Qui profile
Son front gris,
Des toits frêles,
Cent tourelles,
Clochers grêles,
C'est Paris ! ”

“ Tous ces noms dont pas un ne mourra, que c'est beau ! ”

THE STREETS OF PARIS—CORNEILLE—THE THEATRES—THE
ACADEMY—THE HÔTEL DE RAMBOUILLET

PARIS, in Mademoiselle's young days, had not advanced very far beyond the dirt and dangers of the Middle Ages. Though the great seventeenth-century rebuilding, which was to transform the city, had begun, it was still mostly a labyrinth of old, narrow streets, paved with worn stones slippery with the black, stinking, splashing mud for which Paris was notorious. “ De même que la ville est pleine de monde, les rues sont pleines de boue.” Only at noonday the sun could shine down into these streets, over which the overhanging stories of high-gabled houses, with many painted signs creaking and swinging, leaned as if they would touch each other. Shops and stalls of every kind were crammed together on a level with the street ; dark, cutthroat-looking passages dived under black archways into dens unknown. Here the street wound along under the walls and turrets and past the immense gates of some nobleman's hôtel ; there it was shadowed by the height of a church, a forest of Gothic pinnacles, a great tower where

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the eternal calling of the bells, morning, noon, and night, almost deadened the other varied clamour, street-cries, talk and quarrelling, rumbling wheels and clattering feet, of the crowds below.

As for them, they were of the kind that Captain Fracasse encountered, when he arrived in Paris, about this time, with his good friends the comedians. Coaches of varying dignity, some with running footmen and prancing horses, splendid nobles and beautiful ladies laughing through glass windows from the velvet-lined interior; others shabby and sober, with leathern curtains to protect some learned doctor or man of business from the rude jokes of passers-by. Waggons loaded with stone, with logs, with wine-barrels, hay, straw, blocking the narrow way; coachmen and carters shouting and swearing furiously. Men on horseback pushing foot-passengers to right and left; *chaises-à-porteurs*, either private or on hire. These were very commonly used in Paris, the hired ones being numbered, like cabs; for women and delicate people could not walk in the streets. Now and then, as Gautier vividly describes it, a herd of horned beasts comes bursting round a corner, plunging with lowered heads into the crowd, terrifying and terrified, with dogs barking at their heels and cudgels whacking their sides. Horses start and rear, and the confusion, worse than ever, is made desperate by the sudden rattle of a drum; a company of soldiers, *tambour en tête*, banners fluttering, dashes along on its way from one quarter of Paris to another.

Some party of bravos and ragamuffins starts a sham fight in a suddenly opening square, or at the corner of a bridge over the Seine. "Tue, tue!" they cry, and the silly crowd pushes and runs to see what is the matter. But these quarrelsome wretches are only the leaders of a band of *coupe-bourses* and *tire-laines*, who ply a brisk trade in the mêlée, and many a fool, when it is over, has lost his purse lined with money and his cloak lined with silk.

This noisy life flowed out in all its variety on the quays and bridges, especially the Pont Neuf, white and brilliant in con-

trast with the blackness of the old streets. This popular playground was a haunt of beggars and horrible "freaks," quack-doctors and dentists, mountebanks and monkeys, bird-fanciers and all kinds of small trades and trickeries. On the parapets, under the eyes of King Henry on his famous horse of bronze, books and papers were sold. Here came the *nouvellistes* and the so-called poets, chattering and disputing, with their gazettes, libels, satires, pamphlets, political and society *brochures*, poems, songs, plays. "Bon ou mauvais, c'était là"—on the Pont Neuf—"que battait le cœur de Paris populaire." Public opinion was made here—a power against which kings and laws sometimes fought in vain.

The most remarkable sight on the bridge, and one of the most curious things in Paris, was the water-tower called *La Samaritaine*, with its fountain, clock, and figures worked by machinery. The water flowed into a basin, over which leaned the Woman of Samaria. On the other side stood Our Lord, in conversation with her. These statues were in gilded lead. Above them were an astronomical dial and a clock-face; showing the course of the sun and the moon, the year, the month, the day, the hour. At certain times, sculptured lions rolled their eyes and lashed their tails, music sounded from instruments touched by angels, and one by one appeared the sacred scenes of the New Testament, from the Nativity to the Ascension. But at every hour the sweet chimes of the clock rang silvery along the bridge, and the *Jacquemart*, lifting his hammer, solemnly struck the bell.

From the Pont Neuf, one could look round with King Henry on this small seventeenth-century Paris, all wild romance and gaiety, beautiful in clear light and shadow, the centre of life and thought, *la Ville Lumière* even then. The Seine flowed stately from east to west between banks that were picturesque and varied, with gardens and trees and old corners of wall and towers, for the quays did not extend far. There was a thronging life of boats and barges on the river, a great highway, and if the water was dirty enough, there was no lack of colour and bright reflections.

On the right bank, from the heavy keep of the Bastille near the Porte Saint-Antoine, past the Place de Grève with the new Hôtel de Ville on the left, and on the right the now fashionable quarter, the Marais, where society entertained itself in the high houses of the Place Royale, built by Henry IV—narrow streets led on to the main artery of Paris, the Rue Saint-Honoré. There, close to the Porte Saint-Honoré, stood the new palace built by Cardinal de Richelieu. He demolished, in building it, part of the old city wall, and made Paris very angry.

To the north was the quarter of the Markets, farther off still the fortress-prison of the Temple, with an aristocratic neighbourhood of its own, and the streets and lanes leading towards St. Denis. Nearer the river a congeries of hôtels, churches, hospitals, some—such as the famous old Quinze-Vingts—surrounded with walled orchards and gardens, pressed up on the courts and soaring roofs of the old palace of the Louvre. The Tuileries, gay and graceful, ended the buildings on that side. During Mademoiselle's youth, while the Tuileries was still her Paris home, a great building and enlarging went on under Richelieu's orders at the Louvre, and for this reason Louis XIII and his Queen held their court chiefly at Saint-Germain. The splendour of the royal Louvre was dim, at this time, compared with that of the Palais-Cardinal, where Richelieu lived with all the airs of Royalty. Now, and for long after, the space between the Louvre and the Tuileries, united by the new gallery facing the river, was blocked up with streets and tall houses, several of them the hôtels of nobles and princes of the blood. Here, next but one to the corner of the old Rue St. Thomas du Louvre, was the school of Paris for politeness and the finer literature, the famous Hôtel de Rambouillet.

On the left or south bank, the actual town had always been much smaller than on the opposite shore. There was the University, the *quartier Latin*, beloved of Bohemians, the many colleges, the Sorbonne, terrible to heretics; there was the beautiful Hôtel de Cluny, hired by many famous person-

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ages from the Abbots of Cluny, who did not want it; there were churches crowded together, and convents and abbeys innumerable. The ancient Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés covered many acres of the southern faubourg. The Benedictine Abbey of the Val-de-Grâce, the Queen's favourite foundation, was there, and the great Carmelite Convent so well known in Court and society, where in after years Louise de la Vallière took the veil. There also were palaces with vast gardens, old and new, finished and unfinished; the palaces of Queen Marguerite de Valois and of the Duc de Nevers; and farther north Queen Marie de Médicis' new palace of the Luxembourg, which after her death in 1642 became the property of her son Gaston d'Orléans.

Where Henry's statue stood, his bridge touched the western point of the island city, the heart of old Paris from its earliest foundation; and turning eastward, looking past the stately Place Dauphine, which he built, one saw in the near distance the towers of Notre Dame, and nearer still, the dreamy grace of the Sainte Chapelle with its beautiful roof springing into the air, the wonderful legacy of St. Louis and the Middle Ages.

Round it were grouped the buildings of the Palais de Justice, the "Palais" *par excellence* of the old city; once the residence of kings, and now, in the seventeenth century, the Parliament-house of France, its great hall lately rebuilt after the terribly destructive fire of 1618. Here too were the law courts; lawyers and clients bustled through the halls and galleries and passages; men of business and of letters strolled and talked and disputed there. Some of the most fashionable shops of Paris, as we know from Corneille's comedies, were to be found in one of the galleries; there came the young beauties from the Place Royale, and leaving coach and chair at the entrance, amused themselves and their lively *suivantes* with purchases of lace and embroidery, while their lovers, close by, made a pretence of turning over and criticising the bookseller's last volume of poems, or choosing smart gloves and ribbons at the mercer's next door.

All the airs and affectations, the fashionable chatter, the favourite subjects, the manners and customs, the morals and principles, of the society in which Mademoiselle grew up, are wonderfully described for us in those early comedies of Corneille. They are made out of everyday adventures, "à peine romancées." France had never yet had a play-writer who drew his inspiration straight from real life. Pierre Corneille, whose home was at Rouen, only came to Paris for a few months in the year, employed by Cardinal de Richelieu, with other hack poets, to put his rather ordinary ideas into theatrical shape. But he soon grew into greater things; and from being the product of his time, became its leading influence. Corneille's *théâtre*, popular beyond all precedent, and without any rival to signify, carried forward on different lines the civilising work that *L'Astrée* had begun.

Honoré d'Urfé, a "little gentleman of Forez," a friend of St. François de Sales, divided with Madame de Rambouillet and her salon the honour of leading France out of the worst savagery and corruptness of manners which stained society in the sixteenth century, under the Court of the Valois. He enthroned sentimental passion in the place of violence and brutality. His romance in many volumes kept its popularity almost up to the Revolution; and in his own time he softened the whole spirit of society. Real life, however, and character worthy of the name, had very little place in his imaginative world.

And here comes in the grandeur of Corneille. His moral views and his ideas of humanity were on an infinitely higher plane than those of d'Urfé. Not passion, but duty, was the power enthroned by him.

"Faites votre devoir, et laissez faire aux dieux," cries Horace, the old hero, to the young men as they go out to fight for Rome against Alba. Honour, heroism, self-sacrifice, loyalty to God and to the laws of human society; generosity to enemies; the supreme power of will, the possibility and the duty of conquering a man's own strongest passions; these were the lessons taught by Corneille to France at this time.

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Even in the comedies, light and easy as they are, you find the new reign of self-control; the tragedies, which were all the rage in Paris during Louis XIII's last years, are from beginning to end heroic in tone. Society found a new inspiration in them. Men and women, some with sincerity, some merely to follow the fashion, formed themselves on the model of Corneille's heroes and heroines. His influence can be traced in the lives and the doings of many great people of his day. His stateliness and heroic dash had a wonderful effect on minds unsatisfied by love complications and long-drawn-out sweetnesses. It was as if the magnificent sternness of old Rome and the chivalry of the Middle Ages had come back into the world together, speaking in that verse of noble quality, with that frank, straightforward simplicity, which thrilled the young ears of Mademoiselle Marie de Rabutin-Chantal and Mademoiselle de Montpensier.

If Corneille's plays were a new inspiration for France, they, on the other hand, were inspired by her. "Il nous offre une fidèle et saisissante peinture de cette France de Richelieu, de cette classe aristocratique qui inaugurerait la monarchie absolue et la vie de société." So says M. Lanson, a delightful critic and lover of old Father Corneille. Reading the plays with this idea, one finds history and politics, as well as manners, shadowed there: a natural consequence of the impressions made upon Corneille's mind by the events passing around him. Writing of mediæval Spaniards and ancient Romans, he was always a man of his own time, influenced by all the rules and etiquettes and prejudices of his day. His plays had their moral for statesmen, as well as for nobles and great ladies. Richelieu, when he laid orders on his young Academy to condemn *Le Cid*, was angry with the poet's glorification of Spain, as well as with the bold ignoring of his own laws against the duel. The *Éminentissime* had also private and meaner motives, but these show the actuality which was felt by Corneille's contemporaries to exist in every line he wrote.

With all its passion for things theatrical, Paris of the

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earlier seventeenth century had only two theatres. These were both on the right bank, and not very distant from each other. The famous Hôtel de Bourgogne, of which a tower still remains, was in the old Rue Mauconseil, in the quarter of the Halles, near the Church of Saint-Eustache. Its rival, the Théâtre du Marais, was in the Vieille Rue du Temple, not far from the Place Royale. Both streets were dangerous at night, and the audience at both theatres was of the wildest. Until Corneille's plays began to be acted at both, women of the better sort could not attend either; but by the last year of Louis XIII manners had mended here, as elsewhere. *Le Cid* was acted at the Marais in 1637, when in spite of the Cardinal and the Academy Paris went wild with enthusiasm; "beau comme *le Cid*" was the expression of the moment. *Polyeucte* appeared at the Hôtel de Bourgogne in the winter of 1642. Thus each theatre could boast of having produced at least one chef-d'œuvre; as to the other comedies and tragedies honours were divided. It seems, however, that the Hôtel de Bourgogne stood first in public opinion, and had the best claim to be called the forerunner of the Français: "le vrai lieu de la comédie est l'Hôtel de Bourgogne." Neither the one nor the other was built as a theatre; the company of the Bourgogne hired the large hall of the Hôtel from the Confraternity of the Passion, who had bought it a century before; and the famous actor Mondory—who played Rodrigue in *Le Cid*—had shown the public the way to a tennis court in the Marais quarter which he had fitted up for his troupe of comedians.

Corneille was to be seen at his own representations, with his grave Norman face, long nose, good eyes, hair thin on the top, but curling on his wide collar. He had an anxious, almost appealing look; the visible self-diffidence so sharply touched by the Academy's absurd, pedantic verdict on *Le Cid*—the play was improbable, lacked the unities, might very expediently not have been written at all.

It was a foolish beginning for the Academy. But after all, these voices had something in them of prophecy.

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Corneille's influence on the French literary mind did not last beyond a generation, though the people and a few choice spirits love him to this day. His genius, on its theatrical side, was more Spanish than French. Queen Anne had a passion for his plays, and they were constantly acted at Court, as well as in the houses of great people. It was here, not at the public theatres, which princesses did not attend, that Mademoiselle caught heroic ideas and added more than a dash of high-flown adventurousness to her natural touch of eccentricity. And it may be added that all she learned from "notre vieil ami Corneille," as Madame de Sévigné called him regretfully, was honest, honourable, and clean.

The theatre of Corneille's day was an oblong hall with a platform at the end as stage, approached by a flight of steps, on each side of which sat the musicians. Two pieces of tapestry, drawn to each side, made the curtain, with the royal arms above. There were no seats on the floor of the hall, but down each side ran a double row of galleries, the upper part divided into boxes. These were closely packed with men of fashion and with more or less elegant *précieuses*, as ready to criticise as any literary women of to-day. People of very high rank, social or religious, came masked, or were hidden behind a grated screen; a cardinal or an abbess was not impossible to find there. The public crammed the lower galleries and covered the floor and climbed on the stage: good citizens of Paris with their wives and families, mixed in a motley crowd of young dandies, soldiers, thieves, "pastry-cooks, poets," *cadets de Gascogne*, actors, fiddlers, pages, all and each bent on amusing themselves in their own way quite as much as on listening to Corneille. Royal musketeers strutted about and bullied their neighbours.

In a distinguished place above the hurly-burly sat members of the new Academy which was to make modern literature, though it began by refusing to elect Corneille. There might be seen—at least, if his Calvinist principles did not keep him away—"the illustrious M. Valentin Conrart," the founder of the Forty Immortals, who, a small group in those early days,

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used to meet at his house before his authority had to give way to that of the great patron, Richelieu. There was ugly little M. Godeau, Bishop of Vence and Grasse, known at the Hôtel de Rambouillet as "le nain de Julie," who divided his time between verse-writing in Paris and preaching in his far-away dioceses. There was M. de Gombauld, a well-known poet in his day; tall, grave, ceremonious, nicknamed by Madame de Rambouillet "le beau Ténébreux." There was M. Chapelain, mean in looks, dressed in old and extraordinary clothes, one of the Academy's most learned and active members, to be slain as a poet, in later years, by the satire of Boileau. And there were more Immortals, often as ridiculous as they were literary, but respected and run after by the world of their day.

The mocking spirit of Gaul showed itself in one of Monsieur's diversions. He planned a rival Academy of the most ignorant men he could find; and it was still quite possible to hit on gentlemen who could hardly read or write. He gave a sum of money to Captain Brulart du Boulay, one of this distinguished band, that he might supply books, paper, and ink for the room in which they were to meet. As none of these were forthcoming, Le Boulay was called to account. He was clever, if not learned. The words "treasurer" and "thief" meant in his opinion the same thing. He frankly owned that the money had gone no further than his own purse. He had to run away from the laughing fury of Monsieur and the rest; but the new Academy "alla à vau l'eau."

People have laughed at the Hôtel de Rambouillet and the advanced women whose exaggerated imitators became *les Précieuses Ridicules*. But Catherine de Vivonne, Marquise de Rambouillet, was really a remarkable person, and her century owed her a great deal. Her influence and that of her polite and literary salon was at its height in the last years of Louis XIII's reign. At the time, no one could have held such a position as hers who was not a great lady as well as a clever woman, and she was equal to the highest in France,

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the blood royal and a few duchesses only excepted. Her father, Jean de Vivonne, Marquis de Pisani—a Frenchman, in spite of his Italian title—had married Giulia Savelli, a noble Roman, widow of one of the Orsini family; thus Madame de Rambouillet was connected with Princess Maria Felice Orsini, the unhappy Duchesse de Montmorency.

Her husband, the Marquis de Rambouillet, of the ancient family of Angennes, and in his father's lifetime Vidame du Mans, has been overshadowed by his wife's fame. He was a tall, good-looking, sharp-faced man, a courtier and a diplomat, bold, quarrelsome, extravagant. With all this, he was a prince among husbands, and continued all his life to be Madame de Rambouillet's devoted admirer. Everything that she and his pretty daughters did was beautiful in his eyes. His two sons brought sorrow. One died of the plague at eight years old; the other, known as Marquis de Pisani, became deformed through the carelessness of his nurse, and was the one short and ugly member of the family. He grew up a gallant young fellow and a good soldier, however; he was a devoted follower of Condé—then Duc d'Enghien—and died fighting under him at the battle of Nördlingen.

M. de Rambouillet possessed the splendid and almost royal château of his name, twenty-five miles from Paris, where François I died. But Madame de Rambouillet cared little for her woods and parks and gardens, except as the scene of the beautiful fêtes and surprises with which she amused her friends in summer weather. She lived almost entirely in Paris, busy with her mission of encouraging literature and refining society. The old hôtel belonging to the family having been pulled down by Richelieu when he built the Palais-Cardinal, she rebuilt after her own design the Hôtel Pisani, her father's old house in the Rue St. Thomas du Louvre. It was known ever after as the Hôtel de Rambouillet.

The Marquise added to her many talents that of being a clever and original architect. She built her house on a

new, dignified, and intelligent plan with a view to society and conversation. No more low rooms and dark poky passages, such as had contented the Middle Ages and the Renaissance even in their palaces. High rooms, high windows, high doors, a stately suite of salons opening one into the other, no longer divided by a central staircase. We are told that the Hôtel de Rambouillet was the model for builders in the second quarter of the century. Queen Marie de Médicis, building her palace of the Luxembourg, sent her architect to take a lesson there.

Madame de Rambouillet was a near neighbour of Mademoiselle at the Tuileries, and from one of her large new windows had a view of Mademoiselle's own garden. She also looked into the orchard and garden of the Quinze-Vingts, the great hospital for the blind, and into the court and garden of M. de Chevreuse. He was unneighbourly enough to block out her view by building a projection from his own house, and this was thought the more unkind, as M. de Rambouillet had saved his life, years before, in a skirmish with some personal enemies. But Madame de Rambouillet was not very popular with the old Court world, which affected scorn of her ideas and envied her influence.

For her part, she went little to Court, preferring books and civilised talk to intrigues and gossip, coarse jokes and frivolity. But the best of the younger half of society, royal and noble, came to her, and met in her salons the men and women whose only distinction was literary. There, besides the members of the young Academy, every author or person of intelligence was welcomed. There poets read their works and listened to criticism—sometimes hardly worth having, as when Corneille was advised to lock up *Polyeucte* in a drawer. There the pedantic Ménage strutted and boasted, and there clever little Voiture laughed and flirted and amused the company with many impertinences. There the admired "Cavalier Marino" introduced the flowery language of his *Adone*. His great book, "forty-five thousand lines of word painting," lies before one now as it may have lain on

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Madame de Rambouillet's table ; bound in vellum fresh and strong after nearly three hundred years, the title-page splendidly printed in red and black by Oliviero de Varano—Olivier de Varennes—at Paris, in the Rue St. Jacques, and bearing the revered name of His Most Christian Majesty “Lodovico Decimoterzo, Re di Francia e di Navarra.” Within there is a dedication to Queen Maria de' Medici, the poet's especial patron, and a long introductory discourse in French by Chapelain, then a young man. For the *Adone* was published in 1623, years before Mademoiselle and her contemporaries learned manners at the Hôtel de Rambouillet. And Marini was dead, leaving his *préciosité* as a bad legacy behind him.

One of the popular members of the Rambouillet society was Robert Arnauld d'Andilly, a type of the inconsistencies of the time. The violent energy of his family, the obstinate thoroughness which made his grandfather a fighting Huguenot and his sister the reforming Abbess of the famous community of Port Royal, seems to have led this man from one extreme to another. He was a courtier, a follower of Richelieu, a friend of Monsieur—the combination was difficult—an outspoken admirer of that stern Augustinian, the disgraced Abbé de St. Cyran ; and finally, tired of compromises, throwing his whole soul into the passionate religion of the Port Royalists, he retired to Port Royal des Champs and became one of that band of hermits whose bones were dug up and scattered to the winds in the last years of Louis XIV, now a child learning to walk. It is curious to remember that d'Andilly tried hard for the appointment of tutor to the Dauphin. The Arnauld influence on Louis XIV might have had strange effects from a religious point of view.

It was Robert d'Andilly's cousin, Pierre Arnauld de Corbeville, a well-known soldier and courtier, Madame de Rambouillet's *carabin-poète*, who one day brought from Dijon a boy of sixteen, Bossuet by name, that he might amuse the society by preaching to it. This sermon, which probably bored Mademoiselle de Montpensier, for she was of the

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same age as the preacher and a frequent guest at the Hôtel, was not young Bossuet's first attempt. He had *prêchotté* since he was twelve years old. Among his listeners may also have been the gay and smiling Mademoiselle de Chantal at seventeen, to be married in a few months to the Marquis de Sévigné. Older and more critical, there was the romantic and sensitive Madame de Sablé. There were also Mademoiselle de Scudéry and her excellent but insupportable brother Georges, with airs of oracle and *matamore*.

The once beautiful Mademoiselle Paulet with her mass of red-gold hair, Madame de Rambouillet's converted protégée, addressed by the poets as "adorable lionne," was still an attractive presence, though far from young. She was known among the Précieuses as *Parthénie*, and her exquisite voice in singing to the lute and the theorbo was one of the charms of the Chambre Bleue.

Among the great personages of the Court who most frequented it were the Princesse de Condé with her daughter and eldest son. Its atmosphere was a fine training in manners and intelligence, for the Marquise would endure no lack of either. But Madame la Princesse, the first lady in France after the Queen and Mademoiselle, whose beauty, like Helen's, had once nearly set Europe in flames, was a woman of some real distinction, and knew how to appreciate this bold advance from the coarseness of a world she knew too well. As to refinement and education, her children had a poor example in their father, the first Prince of the blood. Henry Prince de Condé was a clever, resolute man, but mean in his character, odious in his manners, and dirty and neglected in his dress and appearance. None of the Condé men were remarkable for good looks. But the young Louis, Duc d'Enghien, though short and not really handsome, had the bright wits and the daring, dashing charm of a Montmorency.

In the winter of 1642 he and his fascinating sister, Anne-Geneviève de Bourbon, were both already married, she to the middle-aged Duc de Longueville, he to Richelieu's young

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niece, Claire-Clémence de Maillé-Brézé, who was still at the Carmelite Convent, playing with dolls and learning to read and write. But the brother and sister continued to be Madame de Rambouillet's most welcome and attractive guests. They were too clever, too clear-minded, to be touched by the later affectations of that artificial society, but they knew how to take the best of it. The Duc d'Enghien was Corneille's most sincere admirer, and Bossuet's lifelong friend.

It seems that Cardinal de Richelieu viewed the assemblies at the Hôtel de Rambouillet with a certain anxiety. If the Marquise and her family were above any suspicion of political intrigue, it was not so with all her guests. Richelieu once sent Père Joseph to her on a secret mission, to inquire into what she knew of the views and actions of Madame la Princesse, and to point out that by acting as his spy she might secure certain advantages for her husband. He applied to the wrong person. Madame de Rambouillet told him politely but decidedly that "le métier d'espion" was one which did not suit her.

Madame de Rambouillet was a tall, handsome woman with weak eyes and a thin skin. The peculiar features of the famous Chambre Bleue were owing to her dread of light and heat. We owe the best account of that shrine of conversation to Mademoiselle, who described it many years later in her playful little book, *La Princesse de Paplagonie*. Mademoiselle, tomboy as she was, and a Princess of the *vieille roche*, with little respect for the new refinement or care for the new literature—except so far as Corneille touched her heroic side—had a real admiration for the divine *Arthénice*—an anagram of *Catherine*—and lingered quite affectionately on the details of her sacred corner.

The room was large, and hung with blue velvet; in former days, red and tawny were the only correct colours. The high windows, from floor to ceiling, opened on a beautiful garden, over the walls of which other gardens made a pleasant green view. In an alcove darkened by screens sat "the Athenian

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goddess," the mistress of the house; here, in groups of two or three, her guests came to talk with her. She was surrounded by portraits of people she loved; as she gazed on these, her very look was a benediction. The rarest books lay near her on little tables; all round about stood crystal vases full of the loveliest flowers of each season.

It all sounds rather modern; but this was the inner sanctuary where the finest minds of Paris and the provinces, whatever their rank in society, learned to talk and laugh and weep and poetise and criticise and flatter, all with the grace and sparkle of a young age. For Madame de Rambouillet was the leader of a new Renaissance in manners and literature, and men and women of letters owe to her the first real recognition of their dignity. Madame Arvède Barine says truly that "we see at a glance the immense length of road traversed since that day when 'the incomparable Arthénice' chose to invite people on their personal merit alone."

It is not very strange, perhaps, that Mademoiselle Julie, her mother's brilliant satelite, delayed from year to year her marriage with the faithful Marquis de Montausier, impatiently waiting in his beautiful scarlet coat. As Madame de Rambouillet grew older, and shrank more from the troublesome rays of the sun, Julie became the active centre of her large hospitality. Probably no woman not actually a great beauty has ever been more universally admired. She was witty and graceful, a perfect dancer, a delightful story-teller, and of a frank, straightforward character. The only persons who disliked her were the victims of sharp speeches or practical jokes; the famous *Guirlande de Julie*, of which the manuscript still exists, shows how her crowd of grateful poets honoured Mademoiselle de Rambouillet.

The Marquise contented herself with one daughter at home, and disposed of the other four in convents. Partly through Mademoiselle Julie's interest with Madame d'Aiguillon, two of these young ladies received abbeys. Claire-Diane, Abbess of Yères, made a terrible mess of her religious affairs, and her convent became a byword for disorder and

mismanagement. She was "une fort déraisonnable personne." She spent much of her time in lodgings in Paris, quarrelled violently with her family, and was for some time shut up in a religious house in Paris by order of the Parliament. Louise-Isabelle and Catherine-Charlotte, quiet and well-behaved young women, who took their calling more seriously, were at first nuns under their sister's stormy rule at Yères, but were afterwards removed to the Abbey of St. Étienne, near Reims. Louise became Abbess there, and in after years her sister succeeded her. The youngest, Angélique-Clarice, was rescued by Madame de Montausier's marriage from a life for which she had no vocation. She came from her convent to take Julie's place at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, but did not inherit her popularity. Though very clever and amusing, she was neither pretty nor amiable. Some years later she married the Comte de Grignan, whom the world knows better through his third wife, Françoise Marguerite de Sévigné.

CHAPTER VII

1643

“Reprenons la danse,
Allons, c'est assez :
Le printemps commence,
Les Rois sont passés.”

COURT MOURNING—THE DEATH OF MADAME DE SAINT-GEORGES—
MADAME DE FIESQUE—THE FAMILY OF GUISE—THE DEATH OF THE
KING

MADemoISELLE, quick and intelligent as she was, knew little of life as a spoilt child of fifteen. She knew nothing, except by hearsay, of death and of mourning; and though there never was a more “real Princess” as to keeping the rules of Court etiquette, it was impossible for her to feel much grief when Queen Marie de Médicis, her hardly remembered grandmother, died at Brussels in 1642.

The King, who had consented to his mother's long exile and had allowed her to die in something very like poverty, insisted on the most formal ceremonies of Court mourning. Mademoiselle, the first Princess of the blood, had to shut herself up for some hot July days in a dark room, entirely hung with black. She found it very dull, for the awkward circumstances—the Cinq-Mars affair being at its height, Monsieur in disgrace and Richelieu all-powerful—frightened away the crowd of courtiers who generally paid their respects on these occasions. Mademoiselle enjoyed no ridiculous scenes, no stifled, indecent laughter, no confusion of visitors staggering in quite blind from the daylight, some bowing respectfully to the chairs, others to the bed-posts—comedies of mourning such as delighted the Court chroniclers of her century.

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In the February after Richelieu's death and Monsieur's return to the Court, Mademoiselle had her first experience of personal grief and of change in her surroundings.

The carnival was very gay in Paris that year, the ogre being removed, though his master lingered in melancholy decline at Saint-Germain. The gayest event was the marriage of Paul de Clermont, son of Madame de Saint-Georges, who bore his grandmother's title of Montglat, with Mademoiselle de Cheverny, a handsome, black-eyed girl high in Mademoiselle's favour. Both bride and bridegroom were people of some celebrity. The Marquis de Montglat wrote some of the best memoirs of the time, and his wife became a favourite subject of the pen-portraits which were so fashionable in the years after the Fronde. In Mademoiselle's own portrait of her old friend one finds pleasant memories of the Château de Cheverny, "un palais enchanté," with all its brilliant diversions. There, under the care of an adoring father, Mademoiselle Cécile had spent the perfectly happy childhood which made her critical of life afterwards. There Mademoiselle had shared her amusements, in the first never-forgotten summer she spent in Touraine. The most constant of women, and by no means blind or stupid, she never gave up a friend because of her faults; but if certain scandalous histories are true, Madame de Montglat was hardly worthy of her esteem. However, if Mademoiselle had chosen her friends and companions for their strict morality, she would have possessed few indeed.

The marriage delighted her, as Madame de Montglat took up her abode at the Tuileries, and was an agreeable addition to the little Court there. But the pleasant arrangement did not last long. The health of Madame de Saint-Georges had been failing all the winter, and the cold mists of February, probably with chills caught at her son's wedding gaieties, brought on inflammation which was very quickly fatal. At the last, the fever and delirium having passed off, Mademoiselle joined the dying woman's family beside her bed. Day had not begun to dawn over the roofs of the city.

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Madame de Saint-Georges had received the Viaticum devoutly, making her peace with God ; and now turned her thoughts, even more than to her own children, to the adopted child who knelt beside her, kissing her with passionate sobs and receiving with the rest a mother's blessing. It was a sad farewell ; for no one knew better than Madame de Saint-Georges in what a world, and to the care of what a father, the Princess's best friend was leaving her.

The Marquise had not long been dead when Monsieur, roused by the news at an unnaturally early hour, arrived at the Tuileries. Nervous, excitable, indolent, he was much worried by finding himself, her natural guardian, in charge of a tall young daughter in floods of tears. He hurried her at once out of the palace, with all the cold-hearted horror of death which seems to have belonged to French royalties, and lodged her and her attendants, as a temporary refuge, in his own apartment at the Hôtel de Guise. This, afterwards rebuilt and known as the Hôtel de Soubise, was a large and curious old house in the quarter of the Temple, on which Monsieur had some claim through his mother-in-law, the Duchesse de Guise ; but it seems to have held many other lodgers, for he could only find room for his daughter and Mademoiselle de Saint-Louis by removing himself to the "Baths" near by.

These bathing establishments, of which there were several in Paris, seem to have been something between a Turkish bath, a fashionable club, and an hotel. People spent a night there before and after a long journey ; people took refuge there from troublesome friends, beggars or creditors, or even from the curious eye of the public. There one could be incognito, "servi, choyé," plunged in luxury, obeyed at a sign or a glance by silent servants. Such a lodging suited Monsieur well enough.

Mademoiselle was not left long at the Hôtel de Guise ; it was indeed hardly the place for a young girl who had lost her governess. She found time, however, to pay a visit to the Comtesse de Fiesque, an elderly and agreeable widow, much

out of health, who was living there. This lady had been an intimate friend of Madame de Saint-Georges, and was connected, through the family of Guise, with Mademoiselle herself. She had been a lady-in-waiting to her mother, the first Madame, and seems to have had every claim to the vacant appointment. Mademoiselle was aware of this. Having been conveyed from the Hôtel de Guise to a more suitable shelter with the Carmelite nuns of Saint-Denis, she wrote to her father and to the Queen, asking that either Madame de Fiesque or Madame de Tillières, her sister-in-law, might become her governess. She frankly confesses that she was a little taken in by the result, as she much preferred Madame de Tillières. She had felt bound to pay Madame de Fiesque the compliment of mentioning her name, with the conviction that she was too old and too ill to be appointed. But Mademoiselle knew little of her sex and her world. When Madame de Fiesque received from Monsieur the offer of the post, her ailments disappeared by magic. Life had still something in store for the invalid old lady; the education of the first girl in France was worth some nervous exertion.

Mademoiselle spent a rather dismal week at the convent, no doubt bored by the various dunces of quality, who, like the Duchesse d'Enghien, were being taught to read and write there. Then a messenger from Monsieur brought her the news of Madame de Fiesque's appointment. She received it politely, sent her compliments, and desired that she might be fetched the next day. Madame de Fiesque arrived in due course, and was heartily welcomed by her pupil. The régime began peacefully enough. The new governess was a delightful talker, full of stories of the old world she knew well. For a short time Mademoiselle found life easy and pleasant. She had also the companionship of Madame de Montglat, who remained with her at the Tuileries.

But the light rule—management, rather—of Madame de Saint-Georges, always gay, indulgent, and respectful, had passed away for ever. Madame de Fiesque found its results

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shocking. Her charge was self-willed, independent, haughty, and positive to an unbearable degree. She thought herself grown up, while scarcely out of childhood ; her manners and language were boyish. No sooner had Madame de Fiesque taken the reins really in her hands, than she began to make her spirited pupil feel them.

First she made a list of Mademoiselle's jewellery, that nothing might be given away without her leave. Then she took the key of her writing-desk, and insisted on seeing all the letters she wrote and received. She chose to preside over the visits of her young friends, and found fault with the *bagatelles* they talked about. Mademoiselle bore these oppressions at first patiently, and kept her temper until the not unlikely event of a quarrel about Madame de Montglat and her relations. It would have been more in the interests of peace if they had all left the palace at the change of government. Mademoiselle might have been broken-hearted, but Madame de Fiesque would have had the fair start which certainly was denied her. Outbursts of jealousy, complaints on both sides, were the natural consequence. Mademoiselle spoke her mind to her governess "assez respectueusement," and was answered with sharpness. Mademoiselle had a cold ; the doctor ordered some medicine, which she declined to take. Then Madame de Fiesque committed the unpardonable offence of treating her as a child ; she locked her up in her room, and gave out that she was ill and must be left alone. Mademoiselle was not long in escaping, and her vengeance was swift. The Comtesse found herself locked up in her cabinet, and had to remain there till a locksmith was fetched, as Mademoiselle, with keen enjoyment, had carried off the key.

In these conflicts, however, she was not always or often the victor. Madame de Fiesque appealed to Monsieur, and he supported her authority. He sanctioned the rules of life and conduct that she thought it necessary to impose. They seemed to Mademoiselle childish and ridiculous, but she had to accept them and to obey. She went one evening against

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orders to visit her grandmother, the Duchesse de Guise, who had returned from exile in Italy. The disobedience was paid for by a week of imprisonment in her room, and this time there was no escaping.

Madame de Fiesque particularly disliked going out in the evening ; her pupil, as the spring came on, had a passion for joining the rest of society on the Cours-de-la-Reine, a fashionable promenade planted with four rows of elms by Queen Marie de Médicis, stretching along the river-side beyond the Tuileries gardens. Madame de Fiesque induced Monsieur to command that Mademoiselle should never go to the Cours without his special permission. This meant frequent disappointment ; for the Hôtel de Guise was far off, and Monsieur, whose ways were uncertain, not always easy to find. Probably the neighbouring Hôtel de Rambouillet was a refuge for Mademoiselle at this time. She found the Marquise "une chose adorable," and even Madame de Fiesque could not see harm in that exalted atmosphere.

Some friendly gossip made matters worse between Mademoiselle and her governess by explaining Monsieur's reasons for the appointment. He had not an agreeable recollection of Madame de Fiesque as a leading member of his household in his first wife's time. Apparently she interfered too much ; possibly she told tales, and found it her duty to set Madame against him. Now there was little doubt that coming changes would bring to France Madame *d'aujourd'hui*, and etiquette would have obliged Monsieur to offer Madame de Fiesque the same position as before. He was therefore glad to rid himself of a possible critic and spy by giving her the honourable post of governess to his daughter.

At this time, tormented by the new worrying discipline, depressed by short and sad visits to Saint-Germain, where Louis XIII lay dying through those spring months of 1643, and where the Queen was too deeply occupied with present and future anxieties to pay her niece much attention, Mademoiselle found life a dismal affair. She was glad to accept the affectionate homage of the Guise family, her mother's

relations, of whom she had seen nothing since those childish days when she tried to ignore any blood of hers that was not royal.

Madame de Guise and her family were in the highest spirits, once more established in Paris and free from Richelieu's hated power. Her three younger children were with her at the Hôtel de Guise; all of course much older than Mademoiselle, for Madame de Guise had married again when her eldest daughter, the heiress of the Montpensiers, was quite a child. Mademoiselle de Guise—Marie de Lorraine—was a clever woman of eight-and-twenty. Her two younger brothers, Louis and Roger de Lorraine, known at this time as Chevaliers de Guise and de Joinville, were lively young fellows very ready to fall in love. They were charmed to help in amusing their half-niece, Mademoiselle, and she tried a little match-making on the elder boy's account.

It was suggested in the first instance by a certain "assez libre" Madame Martel, an acquaintance of Madame de Guise. It sounded likely enough that the Chevalier—who was afterwards Duc de Joyeuse, his brother Roger, then known as Chevalier de Guise, becoming a Knight of Malta—might be a suitable husband for Mademoiselle d'Épernon, Mademoiselle's specially loved cousin and friend, whom she now had the great joy of meeting again among the returned exiles. There was a little awkwardness at first, Mademoiselle d'Épernon's father and stepmother being "mal avec Monsieur"; but Monsieur showed his good-nature on this occasion, and did not forbid his daughter the friendship which brightened the next five years of her life. The consequence of the match-making game was a rather serious flirtation between young Louis de Lorraine and Mademoiselle d'Épernon. He was passionately in love. He gave the strongest proof of devotion that a lover in those days could give: he visited her when she had the small-pox. For worldly reasons, however, his mother and sister finally persuaded him to give up the marriage, and some time later, to Mademoiselle's keen indignation,

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he married the only daughter and heiress of the Duc d'Angoulême.

She never forgave the unworthy treatment of her friend, and never spoke of the Duc de Joyeuse without coldness and contempt, while his younger brother, a soldier who died unmarried, had her lifelong esteem. And it was for Mademoiselle d'Épernon's sake that she drew back, while still a young girl, from her new friendship with these Lorraine relations. Mademoiselle would certainly have affirmed that first impressions are everything. Lorraine intrigue, Lorraine ambition, Lorraine worldliness and cunning; it was a bad match for the Bourbon temper, rampant from infancy in Mademoiselle.

There were exceptions, however. There was a hero in the family, and Mademoiselle loved heroes. She always admired her grandmother's eldest surviving son, the romantic paladin Henry de Lorraine, Duc de Guise, a man of nine-and-twenty, who came to Paris at this time from Flanders, leaving his unlucky wife, the Comtesse de Bossu, behind him.

The Duc de Guise was one of the wildest and most picturesque figures of that wild time. A "tête folle," a mad hunter after pleasure and adventure of all kinds, rash, daring, generous, this young Lorraine had been for years a terrible annoyance to Cardinal de Richelieu. At fifteen, by one of those scandalous appointments which disgraced the Church, he was made Archbishop of Reims. A cavalier-ecclesiastic in satin and feathers and gold spurs, "petit prélat d'une église bien militante," the stories told of him were startling, even in that day. Among the women desperately in love with him were two of the Princesses de Gonzague, the learned Anne, afterwards Princess Palatine, and her sister Bénédicte, Abbess of Avenay, whose vocation, in spite of Bossuet's flattering remarks, seems to have been no more real than that of the Abbess of Yères, or of Henry de Lorraine himself.

His ecclesiastical character only lasted till his father's death,

when he gladly resigned the archbishopric and begged Richelieu to give him the command of an army. It does not seem that he had any disloyal intentions, but the Cardinal distrusted the whole House of Lorraine too deeply to give M. de Guise any chance of winning distinction as a general. The young man left France in a rage and threw in his lot with the Comte de Soissons and the Duc de Bouillon in their armed conspiracy. After the Comte's death, Guise escaped from Sedan in disguise. He would not, as Bouillon did, negotiate his pardon, but remained in banishment; and this probably saved him from being involved in the Cinq-Mars affair. But Richelieu had him condemned and beheaded in effigy.

Now he flashed back once more to Paris, and all the gay world ran after him. "Il fut à lui seul tous les Guise ensemble," says Paul de Musset, writing of him among the "extravagants" of the century. He had the daring courage and resoluteness of his great-grandfather François, shot by Poltrot the Huguenot; the energy and ambition of Henry le Balafré, his grandfather, murdered at Blois; the weaknesses and the eccentricity of Charles, his father. He had all the faults of his qualities, and many more besides, with an extraordinary charm which covered them all. He made a fine sensation in society.

"Son cœur alloit voltigeant de passion en passion," says Madame de Motteville, writing of the Duc de Guise. His first strong attraction in Paris seems to have been the notorious Madame de Montbazon; the next, more lasting, was Mademoiselle de Pons; he tried to persuade the Pope to annul his Flemish marriage, that he might marry her. But he lived on love-affairs and duels; laws, for him, were made to be broken; and being very rich and wildly generous, he was one of the most popular men in Paris. He was also one of the handsomest; with the high nose and eagle look of the Duc d'Enghien, his features were finer and his expression singularly sweet. He had so noble an air that princes and great men looked common beside him, and people found it



LOUIS XIII

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easy to believe that this hero of chivalry, as they called him, was a descendant of Charlemagne.

It is not likely that Mademoiselle at her Tuileries saw much of the young man, who was more of a trouble than a joy to the respectable Duchesse de Guise ; but in later years she was on terms of cordial friendship with "mon oncle" and referred to him in many of the difficulties of her life.

On the 14th of May, the thirty-third anniversary of his father's death, the sad life and reign of Louis XIII came to an end. Various stories are told of the King's state of mind and of the quaint fancies that took him while he lay patiently waiting for death. He was much occupied with thoughts of his country, for which, it is only fair to say, he had always been ready to sacrifice himself. He had formally directed that the Queen should be Regent, and Monsieur, with whom he had been reconciled, Lieutenant-General of the kingdom ; but with the old unconquerable distrust he did his best to cripple the one and the other by appointing a Council whose opinion they were bound to follow. And he specially excepted Madame de Chevreuse from the amnesty which allowed all exiles to return : "C'est le diable, cela !"

His thoughts wandered to the frontier, where his young commander, the Duc d'Enghien, was facing the troops of Spain. Eye-witnesses say that he snatched the Queen's fan, crying out for his pistols.

"Do you not see," he said, "M. le Duc d'Enghien fighting the Spaniards? Lord, how he drives them! He has defeated them, they are all killed or taken prisoners, except a few runaways. Oh! how right I was to trust him with my army. It was my own choice; I had opposition enough."

He looked solemnly at the Prince de Condé, standing by his bed. "Your son has gained a great victory," he said.

Five days after his death, d'Enghien fought and conquered the Spanish army on the plain of Rocroy. It seemed as if the death-bed wanderings of Louis were a distinct prophecy.

He gazed much, from his high window in the new Château

of Saint-Germain, at the distant towers of Saint-Denis. "I am going there for a long stay," he said tranquilly. "But the road is bad; I shall have a shaky journey." In these last days, too, he thought of his mother, harshly treated and exiled, and the remembrance troubled him.

When the breath was out of the poor suffering body, they sang the *De Profundis* to music that Louis himself had composed. And then, for the few days between his death and stately funeral, he was left at Saint-Germain with a small guard. Of all the Court, only the Duc de Vendôme and one other gentleman remained in charge of their dead King. The Queen, the young King and his brother, Monsieur, all the princes and nobles and great ladies, with their troops of servants and loads of furniture and baggage, hurried pell-mell back to Paris, where crowds waited with acclamation for their new King. There was little pretence of mourning or regret. The enthusiasm was tremendous: "Ce n'étaient partout qu'applaudissemens et bénédictions."

After the Royalties were installed at the Louvre, a few Parisians remembered Louis XIII, *le Juste*, and went out to Saint-Germain, "par curiosité plutôt que par tendresse," to look upon him for the last time.

Mademoiselle, his niece, constant of heart and grateful for his unfailing kindness, was one of the very few who sincerely regretted Louis XIII.

CHAPTER VIII

1643

*"J'ai vu le temps de la bonne régence,
Temps où régnait une heureuse abondance,
Temps où la Ville aussi bien que la Cour
Ne respirait que les Jeux et l'Amour."*

LA BONNE RÉGENCE—THE SUPERIOR OF THE CARMELITES—THE DUC DE BEAUFORT AND THE IMPORTANTS — THE ARRIVAL OF MADAME—THE PRINCESSE DE CONDÉ AND MADAME DE MONTBAZON —A COLD COLLATION—MAZARIN'S TRIUMPH

"**L**A Reine est si bonne!"

These words were in everybody's mouth at the beginning of Anne of Austria's regency. She was borne on a wave of popularity into power much more supreme than the dying King had intended.

On Monday, the 18th of May, several days before the funeral ceremony, she went in state to present young Louis XIV to the Parliament, and on that occasion her husband's commands were set aside in great measure, and she was given full sovereign authority without any of the limits he had imposed. If she wished for advice from her Council, of which the Duc d'Orléans was President and the Prince de Condé Vice-President, she could ask for it; but she was in no way obliged to take it.

The little five-year-old King, with his blue eyes and fair curls, dressed in violet velvet, standing up on the throne; his widowed mother, still beautiful and always stately, wrapped in crape; these two, the centre of a great crowd of all that was noblest, cleverest, worthiest, in the old palace of France, seemed to draw to themselves the adoring confidence of the nation. New hope and life were in the air.

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Every one present at that famous *séance* was enchanted, except a few independent spirits like President Barillon, or clear-sighted men such as Olivier d'Ormesson, himself a red-robed member. "Either I am mistaken or they are mistaken," he says in his *Journal*. He was ready to believe in the Queen's good intentions; but he realised the difficulties in her way.

Few of course in that great assembly would have made Anne absolute ruler of France for her *beaux yeux* alone. Each party had its own objects to serve, and each flattered itself that it would influence the Queen in its own way. Among the princes and great nobles, torn by furious jealousies between themselves, each clique wished her to be independent of its rival as well as of the Parliament. The Parliament had no liking for "les grands," and looked forward, their power being checked, to recovering the authority and dignity of which Richelieu had done much to deprive it. As to the people of France, the unrepresented millions who only worked and paid taxes, their opinion was not asked. But with them royalty was popular; they threw up their caps in joyful hope of peace, lighter burdens, and more food. "La Reine est si bonne!" Paris shouted. "Vive la Régente! Vive notre petit Roi!" and the cries rolled away echoing through the provinces.

Nobody had any idea at all that in giving the supreme sovereign power into the hands of Anne of Austria they were giving it into those of Cardinal Giulio Mazarini. The Italian had kept discreetly in the background during the last weeks of the late King's life, but his influence with the Queen was already greater than any one knew, and on the very evening of May 18th, on her return to the Louvre, she announced her decision: Mazarin was her First Minister.

The Parliament was furious; it already knew something of Mazarin and his views on government. The Court, at first, was on the whole indifferent, though the Vendôme clique, just now predominant, had set its hopes on the royal chaplain, the Bishop of Beauvais—marked for all time by

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the brilliant impudence of Retz as "plus idiot que tous les idiots de votre connoissance." The princes and nobles despised the low-born statesman : Richelieu was at least one of themselves, and a great Frenchman, an enemy worthy of drawn swords and risky conspiracies. At first, too, Mazarin with his handsome face and soft manners tried to please them. "Doux et bénin," as Retz describes him, he seemed at home to be merely an instrument of the Queen's open-handed generosity, while abroad he carried on the high traditions of Richelieu, encouraging the armies, even if taking to himself some of the credit of the Duc d'Enghien's victories.

The fact is that during the first weeks of *la bonne Régence*, society was too passionately bent on personal amusement and personal gain to think about politics at all. The new Minister might govern and tax as he pleased, so long as he did not interfere with their pleasures or the Queen's liberality. Everybody asked for everything, and everybody got what he asked for. Places, pensions, abbeys, bishoprics, governorships, military commands, orders, distinctions, *tabourets*, precedences, privileges ; but above all things and on every excuse, money ; money from the treasury, money out of the taxes, which these people did not help to pay, and under the load of which France had groaned ever since the coming of Richelieu, absolutism, and foreign glory. *La bonne Régence* was not likely to bring peace, with Mazarin at the helm ; nor plenty, with a magnificent but famished pack of men and women, most of them rushing home from exile, clutching and tearing and fighting for every good thing the Court had to bestow. For them, and them alone, the Regency was good and the Queen was kind. She gave with both hands, and the wild crowd took it all, seizing in addition an extraordinary liberty to do as they pleased.

For many years society had not been so splendid, so gay. The Court being once more established at the Louvre, and making very light, it seems, of the formal season of mourning, all the grand old hôtels were filled up again, and Paris, high

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and low, amused itself as Paris only knows how. The merry summer months were never merrier. Mademoiselle looked out from her Tuileries on bright gardens in sunshine, and listened at night, one may be sure, to fashionable moonlight serenades. Once or twice a day she visited the Louvre, to pay her respects to the Queen and to play with the two charming little boys there. Philippe was the prettiest and the most attractive, though Mademoiselle's affection for Louis was constant and loyal. Louis had always something of his mother's Spanish stateliness and a talent for guarding himself from too much familiarity. One can quite imagine that the attentions of a big, frank, noisy, rather awkward and excitable cousin of sixteen might sometimes annoy a dignified King of five.

With girlish enthusiasm, Mademoiselle shared in the new devotion to Anne of Austria. Though she had loved her uncle, she knew that his wife had deserved pity for years of neglect and unkindness, and it was not till later, hurt by the Queen's coldness, and seeing and hearing many things with grown-up eyes and ears, that she began to perceive right and reason in Louis XIII's attempt to restrict the power of the Regency. In the meanwhile, in spite of Anne's indifference, she followed her everywhere like a faithful dog. No interference here from Madame de Fiesque.

The Queen was always *dévoté*; according to her faithful Madame de Motteville, she was really religious. Now that she was a widow, she made it her duty to visit all the churches in Paris on their fête-days. On Saturdays she regularly attended high mass at Notre Dame. Making full use of her new liberty, she constantly visited her favourite convents, especially the Abbey of the Val-de-Grâce and the great Carmelite Convent in the Rue St. Jacques.

Of all the "religious" who inhabited the many convents of Paris, with their immense influence on different sections of society, the Superior of the Carmelites held the most distinguished place. Several remarkable women succeeded each other in this post during the first half of the seven-

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teenth century. They were women who knew Court life by experience and had left the world of their own free will, becoming the teachers, the friends, the counsellors, of society. They inherited the practical good sense, as well as the devotion, of St. Theresa and Madame Acarie. Fashionable sins and difficulties had nothing surprising for them. Their views of life and duty differed to some extent from those of the famous Port Royal. They treated human nature more gently, and made repentance less hard ; thus their influence was wider, if not so stirring and so deep.

It was easier, too, for queens and princesses and great ladies of the old world to confide in a woman who knew them by instinct, than in the strong and stern Mère Angélique Arnauld, whose orthodoxy was suspected at Court, who made small excuse for sinners and showed them little tenderness. She had, indeed, friends among the great, and for some years her influence went on growing ; but not even the efforts of the Bishop of Langres, when he moved her to a house near the Louvre, arranged the hours of services to suit the Court, and clothed her and her nuns in fine white serge and linen with scarlet crosses, were successful in attracting the fashionable world as a whole. It was many years later than this that Mademoiselle visited and appreciated Port Royal.

But the great Carmelite Convent was school and home and refuge and comfort to society at large, and to royalty in particular. The venerable Mère Madeleine de St. Joseph, many times Prioress, was the intimate friend and adviser of Queen Marie de Médicis and all her children. After her death in 1637, one of those highest in the Order was Marie de Lancry (Mademoiselle de Bains), in religion Mère Marie-Madeleine de Jésus, who was also elected Prioress for several years in succession. She, probably, was in authority when Queen Anne visited the Convent in the earlier months of the Regency.

At this time she was about forty-five. As a most lovely young girl, her mother had removed her from school at the

Ursuline Convent to place her at Court, under the care of Marie de Médicis. The Queen was very fond of Mademoiselle de Bains, and appointed her Maid of Honour. Everything was made easy for her, and her brightness and sweetness were as remarkable as her beauty. Lovers abounded; half the Court with its fierce passions, great soldiers such as the Maréchal de Saint-Luc, great nobles like the Duc de Bellegarde, Grand Equerry of France and high in favour with three kings, were at her feet and begged for her in marriage. Her husband would have been a lucky man, for she had a strong mind and a tender, generous heart. Happily for her, perhaps, and thanks to the Queen's protection, she was not forced to accept anybody, but was allowed to follow her own instinct, to escape from a world that had shown her its most worldly side, and to become a novice at the Carmelite Convent.

Even here at first, however, she was hardly safe. The Convent was besieged by her admirers, "seigneurs du premier rang," and the Mother Prioress, far from shutting her up, this beautiful girl of twenty, insisted on her seeing and listening to them all. But none of these gorgeous gentlemen was able to change the novice's firm mind. Neither was she shaken by her mother's entreaties and prayers. This was not the fine establishment poor Madame de Bains had planned for her daughter.

Away in the depths of France, in the salon of one of those houses where old tradition lingers and tourists cannot yet penetrate, hangs a portrait of Mademoiselle de Bains in her habit as a Carmelite. The dark blue eyes smile from a delicate oval face; the brow is wide and noble, the nose straight, the mouth small. Her hands, with their long pointed fingers, are crossed conventionally. In spite of a certain stiffness, the unknown artist's fault, it is not hard to believe that she was beautiful. There is even a little humour in the calm face; one may guess that this nun knew the world before she left it.

The Order, so much connected with the Court, might

have been expected to fail in moral courage where royal weaknesses were concerned. But it was not so at all. When the Queen-Regent's friends began to be aware that Cardinal Mazarin's influence was even more personal than political, the Prioress of the Carmelites was among the first fearlessly to warn Anne against the danger of such an infatuation. Mazarin's angry anxiety—for he dared not yet despise his enemies—shows itself in his Italian notebooks.

"The Superior of the Carmelites spoke against me. Her Majesty wept, and said that if such things were spoken of again, she would go there no more."

The Carmelites were not alone. In all the Queen's favourite convents the same voice was heard, and she, still so closely attached to the *parti des dévots*, began to resent all this bold interference and to listen more and more willingly to her clever and attractive Minister.

She was in a difficult position. Among the princes and nobles there was no real statesman, hardly an honest man. Orléans was popular, idle, and weak; Condé unpopular, greedy, and mean; Vendôme was worthless. The strongest man, apparently, and the Queen's favourite among them all, was the young Duc de Beaufort, his second son. To his care she had given her two children when she was attending on her husband's death-bed; and in consequence of this and other favours he gave himself the airs of the first Prince of the blood. Throughout that summer, as Mazarin's power advanced, young Beaufort became by quick degrees the moving spirit of the opposition. He was handsome, outspoken, open-handed, and popular with the Parisians. His devotion to the Queen changed easily into jealous anger, and after a few weeks the plot of the *Importants* would have deprived her and relieved France of Mazarin, if he had not been too clever for all his noble enemies.

La bonne Régence was not an easy time for the Queen-Regent. She must very soon have realised that she could not reign without the support of a strong Minister. At once

imperious and indolent, sensitive and easily moved to anger, she had an obstinacy and a political sense which would have assured the victory of her mind over her heart even if this too had not been concerned. The old friends, those who set themselves against the new influence, whether they were entirely good and loyal, like Madame de Hautefort—so called since her regular appointment as lady-in-waiting—or intriguing and dangerous like Madame de Chevreuse, newly returned from exile against the late King's wish—each and all were driven in time, though not immediately, from the Court. Madame de Hautefort knew the Queen better than she knew herself, and hated Mazarin, not for political reasons, but because she loved the Queen. Madame de Chevreuse, once so necessary to her royal friend, came back to find Anne changed towards her. She was received graciously, but not on the old terms.

The Duchess had not been in Paris a week before her strong influence was thrown secretly on the side of the *Importants*. Not entirely from resentment on her own account; this would not have been like Madame de Chevreuse; but because she found herself powerless as to her chief object, the promotion of her friends, especially the Prince de Marcillac and the Marquis de Châteauneuf, formerly Keeper of the Seals, but exiled by Richelieu.

All the Court gossip from day to day amused Mademoiselle in the intervals of attending the Queen in her visits to churches and convents, and in the evening strolls she allowed herself round the Jardin de Renard, beyond the gardens of the Tuileries.

Conspiracies were still working underground, and the young Princess knew nothing about possible explosions in society. She had not even begun to hate Mazarin, and this summer appeared to her the most charming she had ever spent. She was quite unaware of offending any one by friendly visits to Élisabeth de Vendôme, the Duc de Beaufort's sister, who was married that summer to Charles-Amédée, Duc de Nemours. Mademoiselle de Vendôme was a person of much charm, if

we are to believe Retz, who was rather seriously in love with her. She was not a great beauty, he says, but like Mademoiselle de Guise she was "a beauty of quality." She had the air of a princess. She was not clever, grave, and indolent, "avec un petit grain de hauteur. Enfin elle était aimable à tout prendre et en tous sens."

Retz, as a young Abbé, saw a good deal of the Vendôme family. Madame de Vendôme was very fond of him, and believed, on the authority of the Bishop of Lisieux, that he was to be a great light of the Church. The party of the *dévots* made much of him, as if they foresaw that he would be a thorn in the side of Mazarin; and it was in the course of this year that they persuaded the Queen to have him appointed coadjutor to his unworthy uncle Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris.

Mademoiselle's pleasant visits to the young Duchesse de Nemours, whose married life was to end so tragically a few years later, were cut short by the interference of Monsieur's favourite, the Abbé de la Rivière. Mademoiselle detested him as a mischief-maker, whose business in life was to make quarrels between her father and herself. This was one of the earliest of them. Monsieur found it politic, at this time, to keep himself on good terms with the rising Minister. At least, La Rivière, bribed by Mazarin, meant him to do so. The growls of discontent and conspiracy were not too far below the surface to be heard by watchful ears. Mazarin himself was not the only person to be aware that his power, if not his life, was in danger. The name of Vendôme was a party signal, and Mademoiselle was forbidden any further intimacy with M. de Beaufort's sister. She was very angry, but her father's authority could not be questioned.

One of the earliest excitements of this summer was the arrival in Paris of the Duchesse d'Orléans. The King on his death-bed having forgiven his brother and consented to the marriage, Madame Marguerite started at once for France; happy, after these years of delay, to rejoin the only man she had ever loved. On the frontier she met with a new offence

in the cruel condition Louis had made. Before she could be received at Court, she and Gaston were solemnly to confirm their marriage—already twice celebrated—in the presence of the Archbishop of Paris. It was a trial to a proud woman who had gone through so much for her husband's sake. She almost turned back in her journey, saying there could be no such complaisance where honour was concerned. When she yielded, it was with "*une répugnance incroyable*."

The first person to meet her on French soil was Mademoiselle, her stepdaughter, who had real sympathy for her at this time. Monsieur met her at Meudon, coldly enough, considering their long constancy, and that very evening they made the required declaration before M. de Paris in pontifical habit, with mitre and crosier, in the chapel of the Château de Meudon. Madame and Mademoiselle de Guise were present with Mademoiselle and a few others at this rather dismal scene. The Duchess wept tears of rage and mortification.

She had no longer, says Mademoiselle, the great beauty which once charmed Monsieur, and the style of her dress did not repair the ravages made by years of sorrow. She knew nobody, and French Court life was strange to her. Mademoiselle did all she could to help her, and was at first high in her good graces. Monsieur, as far as his nature allowed, became a model husband. But at Court and in society Madame was a failure. She was proud and unsociable, though she danced beautifully. Anne of Austria consistently thought her odious. The polite gossips called her "*une pauvre idiote*": a slander, for she had plenty of intelligence. No one without some wit and character could have ruled Gaston, as she did, for the rest of his life; and this in spite of bad health and numberless annoyances.

Monsieur and Madame set up their little Court at the Luxembourg, which he inherited from his mother, but Mademoiselle kept her apartments in the Tuileries under the eye of the Queen. It was with the Queen, and as the first Princess of the blood royal, that she went to all entertain-

ments possible in that summer of mourning. She was thus thrown a good deal with the family of Condé, whom she disliked; and it seems that they—Madame la Princesse and Madame de Longueville, as well as the Duc d'Enghien for his neglected wife—resented the tomboy's precedence with loud complaints. At this time, and afterwards, there were public scenes and quarrels on the subject.

But deeper excitements were abroad. The political volcano went on throwing up spurts of fire through society. Already the spirit of the Fronde was alive in Madame de Chevreuse and her party. The *Importants* did not confine themselves to secret, serious plotting, but began openly to insult those who did not oppose the Cardinal.

The Princesse de Condé was one of the Queen's most intimate friends, and one who did not, for her part, think it necessary to remonstrate in the matter of Mazarin. He, so far, had shown himself friendly to the Duc d'Enghien, and had done his best to secure the support of the Prince de Condé, who was too prudent to oppose him openly. That family, therefore, was high in favour with Anne, and the society of Madame la Princesse became much more agreeable to her than that of more candid friends.

The well-known personal quarrel between the Condé and Chevreuse factions meant more than lay on the surface, which only showed a rival beauty's hatred and jealousy of Madame de Longueville. The Duc de Longueville, before his second marriage, had been one of Madame de Montbazon's many slaves. It was a condition of the marriage that this *liaison* should cease.

The Duchesse de Montbazon, though younger than Madame de Chevreuse, was her stepmother. She had been married about fifteen years to the old Duke, and by this time was known as the worst woman in France. Many impossible stories are told of her. Retz, who in spite of his own character knew how to admire goodness, said of her, "Je n'ai jamais vu une personne qui ait conservé dans le vice si peu de respect pour la vertu." She was magnificently

handsome in a colossal style, with the blackest eyes and hair and a dazzlingly white skin. Decked out with pearls and red feathers, she was a sight to startle society. Her speech was more than free, her manners were haughty and disagreeable. She was vain, greedy, and cunning, yet with a certain stupidity, which showed itself in her management of this affair. Most of the men of the day, from the Duc d'Orléans to the Abbé de Rancé, were or had been in love with her, for no woman, when she willed it, could be more attractive.

One day, two unsigned love-letters, in a woman's hand, were picked up in Madame de Montbazon's salon. She pretended to believe that they had been written by Madame de Longueville to Maurice de Coligny, great-grandson of the Admiral, who had dropped them in leaving the house. Coligny was known to be devoted to Madame de Longueville, his cousin, but no scandal had yet touched her young name. Madame de Montbazon made the most of her discovery, and the story lost nothing as it ran round society.

Madame la Princesse was in a tremendous rage. She was more angry than her daughter, who treated the affair with languid contempt. She declared that the honour of her House had been outraged by this insult; and that House, with its heir winning splendid victories on the frontier, was becoming a national glory. She insisted on immediate apology. The Queen must command it. It was past bearing that her daughter should be less considered than the granddaughter of a cook, she said, alluding to Madame de Montbazon's maternal grandfather, La Varenne, who had been *maitre-d'hôtel* to Henry IV. She threatened to retire from the Court if justice was not done without delay.

On the other side, the whole party of the *Importants*, led by Madame de Chevreuse, the Duc de Beaufort, and the Duc de Guise, supported Madame de Montbazon in her refusal to apologise. But Mazarin, who had no wish to quarrel with the Condés, so represented matters to the Queen that she promised her protection to Madame de

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Longueville. The furious Duchess was obliged to submit, and even her own friends failed her a little when the real story of the letters came to their knowledge. They were written by Madame de Fouquerolles to the Marquis de Maulevrier.

Mademoiselle was present at the Hôtel de Condé, with Monsieur and "une excessive quantité de monde," when Madame de Montbazon arrived to make her forced amends. Though Mademoiselle liked none of the family, she felt it due to her own position, as princess and cousin, to stand by them now. And she was quite as well amused as any of the smart crowd there. She looked on while "Madame de Montbazon, much dressed, entered the room with a very proud air. Having drawn near to Madame la Princesse, she read from a paper tied to her fan the excuses which had been prescribed to her."

The apology was cleverly drawn up: it was the joint work of Madame de Chevreuse and Mazarin. It confessed nothing and asked no pardon; simply stating that the lady was innocent of any slander or calumny, and would never fail in respect for the Princess or in esteem for the virtue and merit of Madame de Longueville. It was read with amazingly bad grace, according to Mademoiselle, and she had nothing better to say of the Princess's reception of it. Her manner was majestic, as usual, but extremely short and cold. In deference to the Queen's command, she said, she received Madame de Montbazon's assurance that the publishing of this *méchanceté* was no doing of hers. After which the Duchess left the Hôtel de Condé with what dignity she might, and she and her whole party determined on a swift revenge.

She had a foretaste of this in a lucky opportunity of annoying the Queen. One evening in August, a few days after the affair of the letters, Mademoiselle arranged a picnic with Madame de Chevreuse and others under the cool trees of the Jardin de Renard. She invited the Queen and Madame la Princesse. The open-air supper was ready,

when Mamade de Montbazon, unexpected, marched in upon the company. Madame la Princesse would not sit down with her. Madame de Montbazon refused to go. Two or three mortal hours, Mademoiselle declares, were spent in argument, while the hungry guests waited impatiently. At last the Queen, Mademoiselle, and all her party walked away without any supper. Madame de Montbazon's insolence was such that she remained, and ate up the collation prepared for the Queen. One fears it must have been a cold collation and a little the worse for the delay.

It proved, however, to be the last supper Madame de Montbazon was to eat in Paris for a long time. Queen Anne was not the woman to take such conduct patiently, and a royal order, the very next day, exiled the Duchess to one of her country houses.

All this embittered the cabal of the *Importants*, and Mazarin, who like his great forerunner was well served by spies, found himself in danger of his life. His movements were watched by a band of young men whose object was to be rid of the new tyranny of this new Cardinal for once and for all. Behind them were the women, still more dangerous, who inspired them; Madame de Chevreuse was not afraid of a crime or of its consequences.

Mazarin waited till September, and then struck hard. The Duc de Beaufort was arrested, and imprisoned at Vincennes. His father and the rest of his family retired to the Château d'Anet, and afterwards fled to Italy. The other conspirators escaped in various directions. Madame de Chevreuse, bitterly disappointed, was exiled once more to Touraine, where she and her friends continued those plots which never ceased till the outbreak of civil war.

Meanwhile, society danced through gay months to the music of its violins. The young Princess at the Tuileries, grown very tall and very handsome, had her own string band and gave balls where everybody flirted but herself.

There were also duels, in defiance of Richelieu's law and the Queen-Regent's anger. The Duc de Guise fought

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Maurice de Coligny in the Place Royale, Madame de Longueville, fair and indifferent, looking on from behind a curtain. Coligny was beaten and disarmed, so that he never recovered the disgrace. This led to a desperate quarrel between the Houses of Orléans and Guise and the House of Condé. It was all fresh diversion for Paris, slipping merrily on from *la bonne Régence* into the years that led up to the Fronde.

CHAPTER IX

1644-1648

"I a Princess, king-descended, decked with jewels, gilded, drest . . .

All my walls are lost in mirrors, whereupon I trace
Self to right hand, self to left hand, self in every place,
Self-same solitary figure, self-same seeking face.

Then I have an ivory chair high to sit upon. . . .
There I sit uplift and upright, there I sit alone."

HENRIETTA OF ENGLAND—THE PRINCE OF WALES—A BALL AT
THE PALAIS ROYAL—MADEMOISELLE'S VOCATION—THE SAUJON
AFFAIR—THE EVE OF THE FRONDE

MADemoISELLE'S youngest aunt, the unhappy Queen Henrietta of England, arrived in France in the late summer of 1644. Ill from hardship and anxiety, she stayed two months at Bourbon for the sake of the waters. Having gone through this cure, she travelled to Paris. Her brother Gaston had already joined her, and Mademoiselle met her at Bourg-la-Reine, being sent in state in one of the royal coaches. They dined and slept at Mont-rouge, and the next day, the 5th of November, the Queen made her entry into Paris.

All the Court, driving and riding, met her with great ceremony outside the Faubourg St. Jacques. The little King placed her on his right hand in his coach, the Queen Regent being opposite, and two Princes, Monsieur and the Duc d'Enghien, the hero of many victories, at the *portières*. The other Royalties followed in their splendid coaches, and the procession was escorted by guards, musketeers, men-at-arms, and a crowd of young nobles on horseback, all dressed in different colours and gorgeous with gold and silver lace.

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The Duc de Guise and his brothers were among the most brilliant of the company. The absence of the First Minister was noticed by some among the enthusiastic crowd who thronged the streets. Perhaps the end of the English struggles was already clear to Mazarin's diplomatic eye.

But Henrietta did not give him a thought, probably. Her heart must have been warmed by this welcome from Paris, her father's great town, to Henry's youngest child. The memory of Paris might be short and its fancy capricious, but it did not forget Henry. Many in this crowd remembered his tragic death-day, while she was still in her cradle. They remembered very well too the departure for England of the pretty and sparkling Princess of sixteen. Of her life since then they knew little, or of rights and wrongs, politics and wars, in King Charles's foggy and muddy and heretic island. Their own Parliament had not begun fighting for its privileges, though the signs of the times, to prudent men, were already ominous. Paris saw what England had done for Henriette-Marie, and loved England none the better, as it cheered her through the streets to her refuge in the old palace where she was born.

Every one pitied this poor Queen, says Mademoiselle, for her state was deplorable in spite of the Baths of Bourbon. She was an old woman at thirty-five, thin and brown, with hardly a trace of beauty left. Madame de Motteville, with a more flattering touch, adds a remark on Henrietta's fine eyes and well-shaped nose. There never was much to be said for her mouth; "not beautiful by nature, the thinness of her face made it look large." But Queen Anne's lady finds many pleasanter things to say about Henrietta. She describes her as brilliant, agreeable, easy and pleasant in society; so gay by nature that she could laugh and joke in the midst of tears, generous and liberal in spite of her present distress. In short, a Frenchwoman of the best kind, who had been compelled, for her misfortune, to live among an alien people.

The Queen of England was established with her house-

hold at the Louvre, where she received the honours due to a Queen and a daughter of France, including a large pension from the King. Some months before, the French Court had removed to the Palais Royal, which Anne found more convenient than the Louvre. Thus Mademoiselle had her aunt for a near neighbour, and visited her assiduously.

It seems at first glance natural and touching that Henrietta should have entertained her young niece with stories of that England where she had certainly left her heart, unkindly as it treated her. The sweetness of life in the green island, where the sun shone sometimes, after all; the beauty and richness of the country, the goodness of the people; and last, not least, the charming qualities of her eldest son.

"I wish you could see him," said Henrietta; and Mademoiselle had no difficulty in guessing the thought behind the wish.

This explained all the raptures, a little exaggerated, about the horrid country which had treated one French princess so ill. Mademoiselle, small blame to her, realised the situation keenly, and was little inclined, from the first, to sacrifice herself and her great fortune for the good of the unlucky House of Stuart.

She played with the idea, however. "If the Prince of Wales had been a modern Cid," says Madame Arvède Barine, "la Grande Mademoiselle—her whole life proves it—would joyfully have flung away prudence. She would have married him and gone off with him 'to conquer their kingdom.'" But Charles was not a hero of Corneille, and had no power to stir his cousin's imagination.

He came to France in the summer of 1646, and Mademoiselle saw him first in the Forest of Fontainebleau, where the Court was then staying. His mother presented him formally to the King and Queen, Mademoiselle and Madame la Princesse. He was a swarthy lad of sixteen, tall for his age, and passably good-looking. It was unfortunate that he could not speak or understand a word of French. This defect made him silent and awkward, and the good-natured



MADemoisELLE DE MONTPENSIER

FROM A MINIATURE BY PETITOT

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Court, doing all it could to welcome and amuse the exiled boy, found him dull company. Queen Henrietta watched with painful interest the impression he made on Mademoiselle. She assured her niece that Charles was already in love with her; that he talked of her without ceasing, and could hardly be restrained from following her about all day. Mademoiselle listened with more politeness than faith.

The winter in Paris was very gay, and the Prince of Wales was everywhere in attendance on his cousin. He certainly did his best, at an awkward age, to please his mother and to forward his own fortunes. On the whole, Mademoiselle was not displeased with him.

"When I went to see the Queen of England," she writes, "he always led me to the coach, and whatever the weather might be, he kept his hat off as long as I was present; he showed me civility even in the least things."

She specially remembered one evening when she was going to a ball given in her honour by Madame de Choisy, whose husband was her father's Chancellor. She was really treated, that night, as the future Queen of England. Henrietta Maria came from the Louvre to the Tuileries on purpose to superintend her dress and the arranging of her beautiful hair: she was an authority on these matters. Prince Charles held the light, while his mother dressed her niece "with all imaginable care." His *petite oie*, which meant hat and feathers, stockings, gloves, sword-knot, and other ribbons, was of Mademoiselle's colours, scarlet, white, and black.

Mademoiselle drove first to the Palais Royal, an invariable rule, to show herself to the Queen. At Madame de Choisy's door she found the Prince waiting to hand her from the coach. While she lingered, before going into the ballroom, for a finishing touch to her hair, he was again there to hold the light. By some sort of miracle, as it appeared to her, he understood that evening everything she said to him. Charles had a good deal of mother-wit, though not fully developed till later.

It was another pleasant surprise, that night, to find him

at her own door when she returned. Such "open gallantry" was much talked of, and at this time, certainly, Mademoiselle liked the English boy well enough. But she never had any serious intention of committing herself as to the future.

There are reasons for regretting this. If Mademoiselle, instead of remaining an eccentric old maid among princesses, had married Charles II, she would have escaped a great deal of the rather unjust ridicule which has hung about her name from her own day to this. Her best qualities, too, would have made her a more popular Queen of England than Henrietta Maria, and would have given her more influence with her husband than the Portuguese Catherine ever had. Neither King nor people could have ignored Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans.

Some characteristics which the French smiled at would have attracted the English, and suggest, in fact, those of many a well-born Englishwoman. Mademoiselle's "single-mindedness and simple, plain-spoken directness, her love of animals and field-sports and country life, her faithfulness to her friends, kindness to her dependents, interest in the common people, all united with a serene conviction of her own superiority, and a passion for dignity and state; a character above smallness and very impatient of it, yet narrow in view and eagerly interested in gossip"; none of this can be called un-English. Moral and loyally religious, yet never bigoted; a little like Queen Elizabeth, both in her childish vanity and her passionate patriotism: the history of England might have been altered, if Mademoiselle, with whom marriage was chiefly a political matter, had not seen an imperial crown hovering within her reach.

She has left us a picture of the occasion on which she began to feel a distinct scorn for her unlucky boy-lover. Rumours had reached her that the Emperor Ferdinand III, whose wife had lately died, was looking to the Queen-Regent for consolation; also that the whole of Austria wished him to marry the young Duchesse de Montpensier. These reports seem to have been equally nonsensical with

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that which gave her to Philip IV of Spain, the husband of her aunt Christine, who died in 1644. But the French Court talked about them, the Abbé de la Rivière made use of them to flatter Mademoiselle, and she, always *gobe-mouche* on her romantic and ambitious side, did not disbelieve them. They confirmed her strong feeling that she was destined for one of the three highest thrones in Europe—Austria, France, or Spain. She had already refused the crown of Poland, and she affected to despise Princess Marie de Gonzague, of the Condé faction, who had accepted it. England with its dying royalty seemed hardly worth a thought now.

One of the chief gaieties of the winter of 1646 was an Italian play at the Palais Royal, followed by a beautiful ball. Mademoiselle, at nineteen, in the height of good looks and good spirits, cut a splendid figure on this occasion. They began to dress her, she says, three days before.

“My gown was a mass of diamonds, with tufts of scarlet, white, and black; I wore all the crown jewels, as well as those that remained to the Queen of England. No one could be better or more magnificently dressed than I was that day, and I found plenty of people who knew how to tell me *assez à propos* that my fine figure and air, my white skin, and the glory of my fair hair adorned me no less than the priceless gems that glittered on my person.”

The witness of Madame de Motteville, always trustworthy, bears out Mademoiselle's fine description. She dwells specially on the wonderful bouquet Mademoiselle wore on her head, in which great diamonds and great pearls were scattered among the flowers, an enchanting union of the beauty and the riches of nature. Out of this bouquet sprang three long feathers, scarlet, white, and black, which drooped upon her neck. Madame de Motteville, contrary to the usual view, observes that a beautiful woman thus adorned looks more beautiful still. But it might be true of Mademoiselle, who possessed rather “the air of great beauty” than the real, supreme thing.

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The ball was held in the large saloon built by Cardinal de Richelieu as a theatre. At the end of this saloon there was a throne raised on three steps, with a canopy, meant for royal spectactors of play or ball. Neither little King Louis nor his cousin Prince Charles would sit on this throne. Mademoiselle therefore reigned from it alone, with the two royal boys at her feet. She enjoyed the position amazingly, and her flatterers had plenty to say about it. She had never, they assured her, appeared more entirely in her right place, and this temporary throne could only foreshadow one more permanent.

"While I sat there," she says, "with the Prince at my feet, my heart, as well as my eyes, regarded him *de haut en bas*. My intention was to marry the Emperor, which seemed at that time likely enough."

Charles pleased her no better when he returned to France a few years later as King of England. The young man had no more to say than the boy "point de douceurs," though his cousin gave him every opportunity. She also found him stupid about his own affairs: in 1649, it would have been more strange if his prospects had seemed to Charles worth chattering about. She was finally repelled by the bad taste he showed when dining with the Queen-Regent. He refused ortolans, and "flung himself on an enormous piece of beef and a shoulder of mutton, as if there was nothing else."

Thus "our mutton-eating King" missed his chance of the great Montpensier fortune.

The impetuous, ill-balanced character of the girl, with her rather anomalous position between the Queen-Regent's and Monsieur's authority, and her obstinate fancy for an imperial marriage, dragged her into several scrapes at this time. She was beginning the wildest and most restless period of her life, and she began it by proposing to become a Carmelite. Surely never was vocation so imaginary as that of Mademoiselle.

She had heard that Ferdinand III was very devout, and it appeared to her that his wife's habits ought to conform to his own. She therefore threw herself so earnestly into all

kinds of religious practices that she was, as it were, converted in spite of herself. The childish play became reality, and took such possession that for one whole week she forgot its original object, and could neither sleep nor eat for longing to be a nun. Her people were alarmed by her excitement, and thought she was going to be dangerously ill. She herself did not dislike the idea of dying at such an exalted moment. Luckily for herself and the Carmelites, she was obliged to consult her father before taking any serious step. Monsieur was very angry, both with her and the "bigotes," whom he blamed for this new fancy. Mademoiselle submitted at once, not without a secret relief. As she says of herself, she was not a demoiselle given to long prayers or meditations, which usually sent her to sleep. Three days later she was ready to join the Court in laughing at her own extravagance.

The Saujon affair was more serious. M. de Saujon, a rather crazy officer on service in Flanders, whose sister was of Madame's household, set some intrigues on foot with the view of privately forwarding Mademoiselle's marriage with the Emperor, or failing him, with his brother, the Archduke Leopold—chiefly famous for an enormous pair of ears. If Mademoiselle knew anything of these undignified proceedings on her behalf, she treated them carelessly as "*chimères*," and the news of Saujon's arrest, one of his letters having been intercepted, only startled her a little. It was left for the ever-busy Abbé de la Rivière to warn her of her own disgrace with the Queen-Regent and Monsieur. They were naturally furious, for Saujon was supposed, with or without Mademoiselle's knowledge, to have been concerned in a plot for carrying her off and marrying her to the Archduke without anybody's consent.

In Cardinal Mazarin's view, Mademoiselle was cognisant of the whole affair, and he, standing silent and amused in the background of her stormy interview with the Queen, had done his best to blacken her conduct in Anne's sight. Having been summoned to the Palais Royal, she found herself in the presence of her father, her aunt, the Cardinal, and

the Abbé de la Rivière, who had already roused her pride by advising her to submit and ask pardon. Strong, she says, in her innocence, she moved forward to salute the Queen, who received her with a cold and angry air. Mademoiselle stepped into a window, and from that point of vantage, above the level of her judges, heard and answered the Queen.

Anne said, very sharply, "Your father and I are aware of your meddlings with Saujon and his fine plans."

Mademoiselle answered, "Would Your Majesty do me the honour of telling me what you mean, for I am curious to know?"

"You know very well," said the Queen. "He is in prison for your sake, and the whole affair is your doing."

To this Mademoiselle answered with spirit that it was no fault of hers if M. de Saujon was neither prudent nor lucky.

"We know," the Queen went on, "that Saujon has planned to marry you to the Archduke, telling you that he will be Sovereign of the Low Countries, with a great deal of other nonsense that you have accepted as truth. The Archduke is the lowest of men, and the worst match you could possibly find."

Mademoiselle was silent.

"Answer," said the Queen.

Her niece then observed that if Saujon had really planned anything so silly and ridiculous, a prison did him too much honour: a mad-house was a fit abode for him. And as to herself, she was not usually supposed to have lost her senses; which must however be the case, if she had really left such a question as that of her marriage to be settled by M. de Saujon. She added a few words of sharp reproach to the Queen for neglecting her interests in comparison with those of other people, and reminded her very coolly of the gratitude she owed to Monsieur.

The Queen was both angry and amazed. Turning to Monsieur and the Cardinal, she cried out, "What assurance! She pretends to know nothing of the whole affair."

"It needs little assurance to speak the truth," said Mademoiselle.

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"Very fine!" said the Queen. "The man is attached to your service, and as a recompense you lay his head on the block."

To which Mademoiselle retorted, in words intentionally pointed, "At any rate, he will be the first."

The interview lasted a long time, the Queen scolding and Monsieur blustering, while Mademoiselle more than held her own, and Cardinal Mazarin, as she was well aware, laughed at her ready and insolent replies. At length she was allowed to go. She departed victorious, in her own opinion, and highly excited.

"That evening," says Madame de Motteville, "the Queen did me the honour to say that if she had such a daughter of her own she would banish her for ever from Court and shut her up in a convent."

This worthy woman, who had heard all the *vacarme* from an adjoining room, had the courage to take Mademoiselle's part, at least as far as concerned the reproaches she had showered on her father. Everybody knew that the lazy and selfish Gaston did not treat his daughter justly, that he neglected her interests and lived on her fortune. Madame de Motteville found herself in some slight disgrace with the Queen, however, for defending the troublesome girl. Partly for Mademoiselle's sake and partly for her own, with the Abbé de la Rivière as a go-between and some help from the Cardinal, she set herself to patch up a reconciliation between the Luxembourg and the Tuileries. After two or three weeks this was accomplished, and included the Palais Royal, where Mademoiselle, who had been ill of fever in the interval, was received, though very coldly, by the Queen. Saujon was set free not long afterwards, and the Court, which had sympathised heartily with Mademoiselle, had its last laugh over the affair.

In the summer, tired of Paris and impatient of the Court, Mademoiselle dashed off independently into the country. She stayed first at her own house of Bois-le-Vicomte—Richelieu's exchange for Champigny—and went on from

there to visit her old friends M. and Madame de Montglat, who received her "with joy and magnificence." From Montglat she proceeded to the Château de Pont-sur-Yonne, where she was entertained by Madame Bouthillier, *née* de Bragelonne, wife of Louis XIII's Finance Minister, and aunt of her friend Mademoiselle de Rancé. She was enchanted with this place: its terraced gardens, fountains, canals, avenues, and the splendid interior full of all sorts of luxury; the river flowing at the foot of the hill on which M. le Surintendant had built his house: Mademoiselle enjoyed it all. She danced, she rode; the prettiest boat in the world was at her service—in vain, for she always hated the water. But the great charm of this visit to Pont was a first acquaintance with Mademoiselle de Neuville, a young and pretty relation of Madame Bouthillier's who acted as the daughter of the house. The two girls took an instant fancy to each other. Mademoiselle de Neuville, as Madame de Frontenac, is a familiar and often annoying figure in Mademoiselle's later history.

She was recalled to Paris by Monsieur, in the middle of August, to rejoice with the Court over the victory of Lens, gained by Louis de Bourbon, now Prince de Condé. Mademoiselle detested him and cared little for his victories, but appeared dutifully at the solemn thanksgiving service at Notre Dame.

Thus the day of the first barricades of the Fronde—August 26th, 1648—found her in Paris. The Court had hardly returned from listening to the *Te Deum laudamus* for French success abroad, when the citizens were taking up arms on behalf of two members of the Parliament, leaders of the recent debates in opposition to the Crown, arrested in that very hour by order of Mazarin.

The "wind of the Fronde" was already blowing, and the four years' civil war had begun.

PART II

THE WARS OF THE FRONDE

1648-1652



CHAPTER I

1648

“Un vent de Fronde
S'est levé ce matin,
Je crois qu'il gronde
Contre le Mazarin.
Un vent de Fronde
S'est levé ce matin.”

THE CAUSES OF THE FRONDE—FATHER VINCENT—MONSIEUR LE COADJUTEUR—THE RIOT AT SAINT-EUSTACHE—A POPULAR PRINCESS—RETZ AT THE PALAIS ROYAL—THE JOURNÉE DES BARRICADES

THE growing unrest in Paris, during those years of the Regency, ran side by side with the growing hatred of Mazarin. As the glory of tax-laden France flamed abroad, her misery at home went on deepening.

All France felt the strain, but the nation generally had no idea of actual rebellion. Much of its intelligence, indeed, as after-events seem to show, thought the war-game worth the candle. The depth of the people's faith and endurance, suffer as they might, was almost unfathomable. Starvation and robbery seemed a part of the scheme of things; there was little or no revolutionary feeling in the air. Any actual anger with the new burdens was mainly confined to Paris.

The whole affair of the Fronde is sometimes treated very lightly as the reactionary selfishness of a few foolish magistrates, the last convulsion of the dying Middle Ages, the last struggle of individualism and darkness against expansion and future glory, of the old order against the new. It was all this, but it was more too, especially in the spirit of its earlier time. Perhaps those who view it thus are rather blind admirers of Richelieu and Mazarin and all their works.

It seems possible, while admitting the many private interests and selfish motives that set Paris in a blaze just then, to catch a glimpse of the real feeling that united high and low, taxed and untaxed, in hearty hatred of the sleek, greedy, clever Cardinal. It must be remembered that he was "a shameless thief" of public money; that while millions were being poured into his private coffers, as modern French historians remind us, the soldiers on the frontier were dying of hunger as well as the crushed peasants in the provinces, and even the Court was in serious difficulties. No more gifts or favours were to be had from the Queen-Regent; she could not even keep her own household and her guests in comfort. One remembers the story of Louis XIV as a child, badly fed and sleeping in ragged sheets. One remembers too how Retz, visiting the Queen of England at the Louvre in the winter of 1648, found her shivering, with no wood to make a fire, her pension having been stopped when Mazarin found that the English alliance meant Cromwell instead of the Stuarts. For by this time, married to Queen Anne or not—a question which the latest researches leave unsettled—Mazarin was all-powerful, and those old friends who had tried to warn the Queen against her infatuation were scattered and silent. But it cost Anne her own personal power and the love of the people.

Never, since the days of the League, had politics and religion been so mixed up in Paris as they were at this time. Since the revival under St. François de Sales and Cardinal de Bérulle, the general influence of the Church, if not her actual power, had greatly increased. The religious orders were reformed and multiplied by private piety; scandals were becoming rarer, at least to outward view. The parochial clergy on the whole were good, and the parish churches were crowded. Popular preachers, sometimes grotesque enough, such as the famous Père André, drew large audiences.

Vincent de Paul, now growing old, still went about in the streets and lanes of the city, comforting the poor and



CARDINAL MAZARIN
AFTER A PORTRAIT BY MIGNARD



directing the charity of the rich. He founded philanthropic societies ; and Cardinal Mazarin found "ce bonhomme" a thorn in his side as to Church patronage. Mazarin was ready to sell for a good price, with no regard to the character of the buyer, every abbey, bishopric, or benefice that he could not bestow upon himself. But there existed a Council of Conscience to advise the Queen on these matters, and Father Vincent was its most active member. It was a struggle between him and Mazarin, as long as Anne's religious scruples continued to be a little stronger than her personal devotion to the Cardinal.

The opposition at this time included most of the good people in Paris, clergy or laity, whether they took up arms openly or not. The spirit which was abroad had so much right and reason, that with a leader of unselfish genius it might have changed French history. But this leader was not forthcoming.

Archbishop de Gondi was a lazy, good-natured sensualist. His brilliant nephew and Coadjutor, consecrated as Archbishop of Corinth, had all the genius, but not the character required. He was a most active ecclesiastic, a dashing soldier of the Church, a popular preacher, taking an immense interest in his own sermons and their effect. He had no morals, of course, but he knew and respected goodness when he saw it. His political action is not, it seems, to be entirely explained by ambition. He hated Mazarin, and he wanted to be a Cardinal ; so far selfishness led him. But he had also a great love of adventure, and of showing off as a hero before the world. And he was by no means without pity for the sufferings of the people. From one motive or another he visited much in the poorest parts of Paris. His charities were large, and Father Vincent himself did not know more of the populace, its troubles and its character and its catch-words, than Paul de Gondi, afterwards Cardinal de Retz, the notorious "Monsieur le Coadjuteur." Dark, small, vivacious, Italian by descent, with his helpless hands, fiery temper, and undeniable charm, he was a favourite

with many clever men and almost all women. From the early days of the Fronde, he had Mademoiselle's respect and hearty sympathy. He and she, with the leading Parliament men, were at this time the most popular people in Paris.

Mademoiselle had already some experience of riots, and enjoyed them. She had seen bands of people marching in the streets, beating drums and fluttering flags, to excite the citizens against one of Mazarin's early taxes. This was a tax on the height of houses which had been built, contrary to old regulations, outside the city walls. They were measured by the *toise*, a six-foot rule, from which the tax was known as the *toisé*. There was open resistance, and the Court had to hurry back to Paris from Rueil in the heat of July, that little King Louis might quiet things down by holding a *lit de justice*. This was still effective in 1644.

In the following year Mademoiselle had been amused to see what the market-folk of Paris could do in defence of their rights or their fancies. The great parish church of Saint-Eustache, then the largest in Paris next to Notre Dame, was much beloved by its population of the quarter of the Halles. The old curé, Merlin by name, died, and the Archbishop of Paris appointed a certain M. Poncet in his place. But there was opposition. A young M. Merlin, nephew of the late curé, declared that his uncle had intended to resign in his favour. The parishioners assembled in crowds to take his part; they had loved their old priest, and were resolved that his nephew should succeed him. A body of city guards was sent to disperse the crowd in the interest of Poncet, whose appointment was perfectly legal. "Cette canaille," says Mademoiselle, "seized the church and sounded the tocsin." They barricaded the church and the streets round it; they challenged the passers-by, and any one who did not reply "Merlin" to their "Qui vive?" was soundly beaten. This state of things lasted three days, and the house of Chancellor Seguier was in danger of being pillaged, because he, a parishioner, but a man of law, dared to back up the

Archbishop's appointment. The people began to barricade the markets, and the disturbance was looking very serious when the fish-women sent a deputation to the Palais Royal. They represented that the Merlins had been their curés "de père en fils!" The Queen-Regent—very weakly, society thought—decided that they must have their way, and a royal messenger carried the joyful news to Saint-Eustache. "Upon which," says Olivier d'Ormesson, "they sang a *Te Deum* and shouted, '*Vive le roi, la reine et M. Merlin!*' In the evening they made bonfires in the streets; even persons of condition."

After this, says Mademoiselle, all was calm in the parish. But she was sorry that so droll a farce could not have lasted longer.

It is easy to see that Mademoiselle drove back from Notre Dame to her dinner at the Tuileries in an impatient temper, and ready to fling herself recklessly enough into any kind of new excitement. She was on cold terms with the Queen-Regent; she disliked Mazarin; she hated the Condé faction, just now so triumphant. Monsieur had injured her dignity by his indifference as to her marriage, and though this quarrel had been made up, she had other serious complaints against him. Madame, with her girl-babies, her ill-health, and her grievances, was nothing but a bore to a lively, wilful stepdaughter of twenty-one. Mademoiselle did not care **much** for her aunt the Queen of England, though Henrietta, on her side, had not ceased to court the haughty girl for her son. Madame de Guise, her grandmother, was still in favour, and she always admired the Duc de Guise, who after many romantic adventures was now a prisoner at Naples, his adored Suzanne de Pons being shut up, to avoid further complications, in the Paris convent of the Filles de Sainte-Marie. Mademoiselle was angry with Mademoiselle de Guise and her brother the Duc de Joyeuse for their disloyalty to her most beloved friend Mademoiselle d'Épernon, at this time living in her father's southern province, but very soon to take the final step from which her friend's affectionate heart suffered so keenly.

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Altogether, and with the constant, unloved presence of Madame de Fiesque, life was as dull as it could reasonably be for a princess of immense fortune, living at the Tuileries. It is not wonderful that the news of the disturbances in Paris filled Mademoiselle with restless joy. Everybody knew old Councillor Broussel, the most popular of the two arrested members. President de Blancmesnil, though less beloved, was a conspicuous figure in opposition to the Cardinal. Plainly, important events were in the air, and Mademoiselle ordered her coach to drive to the Luxembourg.

Passing along the Quai du Louvre, in the hot August afternoon, she saw companies of guards under arms. Clattering on across the Pont Neuf, past Henry's statue, with the Island to her left where the furious Parliament was sitting, she must have narrowly missed meeting the Coadjutor, *en rochet et camail*, on his way to mediate between the Vieux Palais and the Palais Royal. With the cathedral towers in view, where the echoes of Condé's *Te Deum* had hardly died away, Mademoiselle in her coach with her running footmen found her passage blocked by an angry crowd and by chains across the streets. Then Henry's grandchild had a charming experience, never forgotten and often repeated in those stormy years.

"The people of Paris have always loved me," she says, "because I was **born** and brought up there. This has given them more liking and respect for me than they generally feel for persons of my quality; and therefore, when they saw my footmen, they lowered their chains."

It was characteristic of those wild men and women, with their thin, tanned faces, to forget their griefs for a moment as the gay blue-eyed Princess, with her commanding Bourbon nose and masses of fair curls, pranced proudly by.

Having paid her visit of ceremony to Madame, Mademoiselle drove to the Palais Royal, where she found everybody "*en grande rumeur*." Again she seems to have missed the Coadjutor, whose interview with the angry Queen would have added very much to the amusement she found in the

whole affair. But nobody, indeed, seems to have taken it very seriously at first. Neither the Queen-Regent, nor Monsieur, nor the Cardinal, knew the Parisians as Retz knew them; this is undoubtedly true, even if his enemies were right when they accused him both of fomenting and exaggerating the disturbances. On that first day the Maréchal de la Meilleraye, who at the head of his troops had seen the armed people rushing, the closed shops, the chains and barricades, and had heard the threatening shouts of the angry mobs, was the only man who stood by Retz in the Queen's cabinet. The Archbishop and the soldier were followed to the palace by a great crowd yelling, "Broussel! Broussel!"

Retz has taken an immortal revenge on Anne of Austria by his description of that half-ludicrous, half-tragic scene. At first sight it seems odd that the Queen's surprise at the bold attitude of Paris and the Parliament should have been as great as her anger; for the quarrels between the royal authority and that of the Magistracy had been growing more serious for some months past. The refusals of the Parliament to register the King's financial edicts were no new thing. Throughout this year the struggle, though not noisy, had been very obstinate, and in order to resist new taxes more effectually, or rather to hold on to the power of resisting them, the Parliament had sketched out a kind of constitution, strengthening its own authority and limiting that of the King. Mazarin yielded in one or two points, but he would not go far, and the arrest of Broussel and Blancmesnil was the consequence.

The triumph of the English Parliament was an object-lesson which did not apply, after all, though it encouraged French politicians at this time. The French Parliament had great dignity of its own, but none of the popular rights of an elected body. It was an assembly of judges, lawyers, councillors, magistrates, hereditary and irremovable. This character was largely owing to the famous tax called *la paulette*, invented by M. Paulet, father of the famous beauty,

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and imposed with general approval by Henry IV and Sully. It was paid by members of Parliament only, and gave them and their descendants a right to their seats. Thus the authority of Parliament was no more really popular than that of the King, and it did not really follow that the voice of Parliament was the voice of the people.

Both the Queen and the Court were inclined to believe that the rising in Paris was not genuine, but had been engineered by agitators for their own ends. Mazarin probably knew better, as he stood smiling by. Anne's high, sharp falsetto rings from the pages of Retz down the centuries.

"It is revolt to imagine revolt. Ridiculous tales invented by those who desire it. The King's authority will soon settle it."

While her angry eyes rest on the Coadjutor, Mazarin is at her shoulder with his soft voice.

"Would to God, Madame, that everybody was equally sincere with M. le Coadjuteur. He fears for his flock, he fears for the city, he fears for Your Majesty's authority. I am persuaded that the danger is not what he thinks; but his scruples are most praiseworthy."

The Queen changes her tone; the Coadjutor replies with an air of such profound and foolish respect that the Abbé de la Rivière actually thinks he is in earnest; and so the comedy goes on, while the mob howls outside the palace and threatens to break in.

Monsieur pretends to be angry and strolls out to talk to some one, whistling with more than his usual indolence. The Duc de Longueville looks sad and is really delighted. M. de Villeroy, on the contrary, keeps a cheerful face and believes the State to be on the edge of a precipice. "Bautru and Nogent cracked jokes, and to amuse the Queen acted old Broussel's nurse (he was eighty) exciting the people to sedition." M. de la Meilleraye flies into a rage. Chancellor Seguier speaks well and frankly. M. de Guitaut, muttering between his teeth, is challenged by Mazarin and bluntly says, "My advice is, give them the old rascal Broussel, dead

or alive." On which the Coadjutor murmurs that the first course would be neither pious nor prudent, and brings on himself once more the violent anger of the Queen. Flushing scarlet she cries, "I understand you, Monsieur le Coadjuteur! You wish me to set Broussel at liberty. I would rather strangle him with these two hands—and those who——" it seemed as though she would have taken Retz by the throat, if the Cardinal had not stepped forward to soothe her.

After this Her Majesty became more reasonable, and Retz went forth, scattering benedictions right and left, to promise the people Broussel's freedom if they would go peaceably home. By his own account, the errand nearly cost him his life, and this was only the beginning of things.

Exquisite indeed would have been Mademoiselle's enjoyment of such a scene. But if she missed it, there were soon plenty of compensations.

All the wild noise of the tumultuous streets, through which M. le Coadjuteur and the Maréchal de la Meilleraye made their dangerous way, could be heard from the windows of the Tuileries. It died down gradually, and the people went home. A night under arms, in the Marshal's opinion, would have seen Paris sacked; another day, and not one stone of the city would have been left upon another.

The Court took counsel with itself. Distrusting Retz and fearing his influence, it resolved to carry matters with a high hand. Far from setting the prisoners free, it decided to assert the royal authority and to subdue rebellious Paris by military force. The next morning all the centre of Paris from the Pont Neuf to the Palais Royal was to be strongly garrisoned by the King's guards.

But the news of these things, running in secret channels, reached the Coadjutor in his palace by Notre Dame. He heard that the Court was laughing at him, that everybody knew the sedition was his doing, that his pretence of calming the people was nothing but humbug. Retz had no principle, and it is not wonderful that he resolved to punish the Court.

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Certainly, between him and Mazarin, Paris was in bad hands at this time. If "the devil possessed the Palais Royal," he had also a tight grip on the Archbishop's palace. By midnight Retz had made his plans for being master of Paris before noon. He cared not at all for Parliament and the prisoners; he had some feeling, perhaps, for the dragooned people in the streets; but personal pique was at the bottom of it. This was not the beginning of his grievances against the Court. If the Queen and Mazarin had chosen to assure themselves of Retz, Paris might have been spared a good deal of misery.

The people's rising on the 27th of August was in great measure the Coadjutor's doing, and he frankly confesses it in his marvellous Memoirs. It was by his orders and arrangement that the royal troops were resisted at their first movement in the morning. His friend, M. d'Argenteuil, posted with twenty men near the Porte de Nesle, was ready to drive off a special company of Swiss guards sent to make sure of it.

The rattle of this company's drums as they marched along the street by the Tuileries woke Mademoiselle. She threw herself out of bed and ran to the window. Presently they came back, not quite so cheerful, with wounded men dragging behind. The Princess at her high window had never seen such a sight before, and it filled her with "pity and terror." It was her first experience of actual war. She was glad to believe that the soldiers had soon given an account of "ces coquins" at the Tour de Nesle. Retz says, however, that Argenteuil, disguised as a mason, with his twenty men, had killed twenty or thirty Swiss, captured their colours, and sent the rest flying.

Thus, with Mademoiselle at her window and the roll of the royal drums—

Et r'li, et r'lan,
Relan tamplan, tambour battant—

began the famous *Journée des Barricades*.

All Paris was in a blaze. Everybody was armed. Mademoiselle laughed to see men with swords who did not know



CARDINAL DE RETZ



how to hold or manage them. Children of five or six ran about with poniards in their hands. All the old weapons of the League, unused since Henry III's days, even rusty lances as old as the English wars, were fetched out and sharpened. In two hours, Retz declares, there were twelve hundred barricades in Paris, bristling with arms and waving with flags. The streets not barricaded were closed with heavy chains. People who knew Paris most intimately as "*le séjour des délices et des douceurs*," hardly recognised their city.

The first fury of the people fell on Chancellor Seguier. The Queen had desired him to go to the Vieux Palais early in the morning, to endeavour to stop the disorder by a royal message to the Parliament. His way was through the very heart of the city, and it was plainly a dangerous mission, but Seguier, with many faults, was not a man to shrink from his duty. He started in his coach, accompanied by his brother, the Bishop of Meaux, and in spite of his wishes by his daughter, the Duchesse de Sully—daughter-in-law of the famous Duke, and one of Mademoiselle's early companions. The drive was one of fearful excitement. Everywhere encountering chains and barricades, opposition and insult, the Chancellor's coach floundered from street to street through crowds that went on thickening.

When he reached the Pont Neuf, three or four "*grands pendants*" climbed on the coach and threatened to kill him unless Broussel was instantly released. They were shaken off, but the bridge was impassable, and he ordered his coachman to try for the Pont Notre Dame, by the Quai des Augustins, past the hôtel of the Duc de Luynes, son of Madame de Chevreuse, who had married a Seguier, his cousin. At first the crowd here was thinner, and the Chancellor decided to leave his coach and go on foot to the Palais. But the people began to run and cry, "*To arms! to arms! Kill him! kill him!*" and it was with the greatest difficulty that he and his companions escaped into the Hôtel de Luynes. The mob burst in after them, but they luckily had time to hide in a

cupboard. The Chancellor, giving up all hope, confessed himself to his brother the Bishop and prepared for death.

After long and terrible suspense, a strong guard was sent to bring him back to the Palais Royal; but the return was difficult enough. The mob fired at the coach, killing several soldiers; a spent ball struck Madame de Sully on the shoulder and hurt her seriously.

The Parliament, sitting since the small hours, took the news of all this with supreme indifference. They had much more important matters to discuss, they observed. Some went so far as to say that if the Chancellor was killed he had deserved his fate.

The next spectacle in the streets was the march through of a hundred and sixty members of Parliament in their official robes, headed by two Presidents, M. Molé and M. de Mesmes. Chains were lowered and barricades opened before them. Escorted by an enormous crowd which cheered them all the way, they arrived at the Palais Royal and demanded an audience of the Queen.

She was prepared to receive them. The Queen of England was with her, urging patience and peace by her own bitter past experience. Several Princesses were present, among them Mademoiselle. From her own account, she had a little conversation with one of the deputies as they stood in the royal presence. "I did not know him," she says, "but he talked to me very freely." They had already begun "*à fronder* M. le Cardinal," and this deputy, perhaps, felt a gleam of royal sympathy.

The Queen-Regent was very angry with the Parliament and the people; the Seguier incident appeared to her a most serious insult to the royal authority. The King's power and his people's love must both be extinct, she argued, if his Chancellor could be so villainously attacked in the streets of Paris. Madame de Motteville declares that her royal mistress spoke with dignity and good sense in answer to the free and earnest words with which President Molé demanded the liberation of Blancmesnil and Broussel. Retz shows us a

furious woman losing her self-control. According to him, the Queen threw all responsibility for the present state of Paris on the Parliament, left the room and violently banged the door.

There is something comic in the whole scene. The Parliament, thus snubbed, begins to march downstairs. After a few hesitating steps, it turns back, and finds Monsieur, always agreeable, loitering in the *grand cabinet*. The President de Mesmes exhorts him so pathetically that he consents to admit twenty members into the *chambre grise*, where they find the Queen. The President begins to plead with her, to draw a terrible picture of the mad city with arms in its hands. She will not listen, but flings away angrily into the gallery.

Then Cardinal Mazarin advances on the scene. He proposes to give up the prisoners, if the Parliament will cease its factious attempts to resist and to limit the royal authority.

This proposal needs more length and solemnity of debate than can be attained at the Palais Royal, with an anxious mob howling without. The Parliament therefore sets out in procession on its return to the Vieux Palais, arranging to return with its answer in the afternoon, and to meet the Duc d'Orléans, now a mediator between itself and royalty.

But the Parliament reckoned without Paris. In those roaring streets, through which it had marched so triumphantly an hour before, it was now received with howls of rage and disappointment. Chains and barricades no longer yielded it free passage. It was expected to bring back the liberty of Father Broussel; it could only announce foolish negotiations.

In the Rue St. Honoré the mob pushed so furiously on the Presidents and their company, with such terrifying threats and bitter reproaches, that many of them tried to escape for their lives, losing themselves in the crowd; but their official robes made this difficult. Mathieu Molé, the First President, kept his head and his courage, even when a fierce cook, at the

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head of two hundred men, attacked his sacred person with a halberd. "Turn back, traitor!" cried the cook. "Unless you wish to be massacred, bring us Broussel, or else the Mazarin and the Chancellor as hostages."

The intrepid President assured the crowd that he had done everything possible and would now return to do more. He called his companions together, and with the slow, majestic tread of injured dignity he led them back to the Palais Royal, through a running fire of "insults, threats, execrations and blasphemies." The crowd declared that if the Queen would not set the prisoners free, they would tear him, President Molé, in a thousand pieces.

The palace gates opened once more to admit "les longues robes," a string of distracted, frightened, exhausted, and very hungry men. Hours had passed, and the sitting had begun with daylight. They had had no breakfast. The Queen, with a touch of pity for this unfortunate Parliament, sent them meat, bread, and wine, and thus revived they set to work to deliberate on the royal terms. While they were doing this, Monsieur and several princesses begged the Queen on their knees to be less inflexible; even the Cardinal joined his entreaties to theirs.

The Parliament, having deliberated, presented its decision to the Queen. It was ready to cease all obnoxious deliberations till after the Feast of St. Martin, on condition that the prisoners were immediately set free. With a bad grace, and only because of the alarming state of the city, the Queen accepted these terms, and the Parliament, proud and victorious, sure of the future, once more marched forth into the streets with news to calm the wild passions there. But Paris raged all through that day and night, with cries of hatred against the Queen and Mazarin. The next day, Councillor Broussel having been brought into the city, the people carried him shoulder-high through the streets to Notre Dame, and demanded a *Te Deum*. The little old man himself, however, escaped to his own house, where many fashionable folks hurried to visit him.

The riots went on for two more days, and it needed a decree of the magistrates to demolish barricades and re-open shops. The Queen was furious, the Cardinal was terrified ; the Court, mostly anti-Mazarin, laughed at these signs of the times. Mademoiselle, then gloriously amused, shrugged her shoulders when she looked back upon it all. There were worse days to come.

CHAPTER II

1649

“ Lorsque Vigean quitta la Cour,
Les Jeux, les Grâces, les Amours
Entrèrent dans le monastère.
Laire la laire, lon lère,
Laire la laire, lon la.”

MADemoiselle d'ÉPERNON—MADemoiselle DU VIGEAN AND THE GREAT CONDÉ—MAZARINADES AND FRONDEURS—MADemoiselle's AMBITION

IN those early struggles of the Fronde Mademoiselle began already to enjoy the discomfiture of her enemies ; but a deeper interest in her life, at this time, was the final resolve of her dearest friend to take the veil.

After the Joyeuse match had fallen through, it had been suggested to Cardinal Mazarin that Mademoiselle d'Épernon should marry Prince Casimir of Poland, released from his cardinalate as his brother's heir presumptive. Following the King's example, he had applied to the French Court for a wife. Mazarin was at this time planning a marriage between his niece, Laura Mancini (afterwards Duchesse de Mercœur), and the Duc de Candale, the Duc d'Épernon's son. The French nobility, especially those of royal blood, were not yet quite ready to absorb the numerous Italian nieces whom Mazarin had brought to France, and M. d'Épernon hesitated. However, a prospective crown for his daughter might have induced him to accept a Mancini for his son.

The Polish proposal pleased Mademoiselle's romantic mind. The Emperor Ferdinand, it was true, had married again ; but he had a son, the King of Hungary, “a hopeful prince,” who now seemed a likely match for herself. Germany

and Poland, she observed, were next door to each other ; therefore she and her *bonne amie* might almost spend their days together.

However, Mademoiselle's matrimonial plans were doomed to misfortune. Mademoiselle d'Épernon received the proposal as an honour, but without any intention of accepting it, and indeed the story of Princess Marie de Gonzague's experiences as Queen of Poland was enough to frighten any civilised Frenchwoman.

Mademoiselle remarked that her friend "preferred the crown of thorns to that of Poland." If Madame de Motteville is right, Mademoiselle d'Épernon had cared little more for the duchy of Joyeuse than for the Polish kingdom. Her heart had been given, once for all, to that Chevalier de Fiesque, son of Mademoiselle's governess, who fell at the siege of Mardyck in 1646. The young man was a Knight of Malta, and therefore not likely to marry. The "tender and honest friendship" between these two had seemed to the Court very extraordinary, and Mademoiselle d'Épernon's resolve to leave the world was attributed by many to the Chevalier's death. Mademoiselle can hardly have been ignorant of this love-affair, to which she never alludes. It may have been purposely concealed from her, or she may have regarded it with high scorn as a sentimental weakness beneath her notice. For the Chevalier himself she has words of sincere praise : "le plus sage et le plus dévot gentilhomme de la cour."

It was in that same year that Mademoiselle d'Épernon, leaving Paris for the south with her father and stepmother, had told Mademoiselle of her ideas for the future. Kneeling by the Princess's bed, in the moment of farewell, she confided to her that she meant to become a Carmelite. With many tears and loving reproaches, Mademoiselle tried to change her fixed mind. But nothing she could say was of any avail. She could only respect her friend's confidence and rest her hopes on the Polish marriage. They wrote to each other twice a week. After two years, in the autumn of

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1648, Mademoiselle's enjoyment of the public troubles was interrupted by the news that Mademoiselle d'Épernon, travelling with her stepmother, on pretence of being ill, to the Baths of Bourbon, had thrown herself into a Carmelite convent at Bourges. As usual in such a case, Madame d'Épernon's tears and prayers were worse than useless.

Mademoiselle was very angry. The letter she received did not improve matters, being written "in a monastic style, full of sermons and compliments." She missed the tender frankness of old days. She was still more annoyed to find that her friend's destination was the great Paris convent, which they had formerly agreed in disliking, for no better reason than because Madame la Princesse was often there. "But I ought not to have been surprised," she says; "when one renounces the world, that is to say, one's relations, one's friends, a crown, and one's self, the rest is nothing."

She afterwards acknowledged that Mademoiselle d'Épernon was right. The great convent had many advantages over the smaller ones: the house was large, the air was good, the community was numerous—young women of wit and quality, who had left the world because they knew and despised it; "so good nuns are made." And after all, both being in Paris, they could often see each other.

The first meeting was painful. Mademoiselle's anger had changed to a passion of love and grief. She sobbed for two hours. Her friend behaved with what some people might call firmness; to Mademoiselle it seemed "*la dernière cruauté*," and she found it hard to bear being lectured on her pitiable state of mind. The whole scene, perhaps her whole story, suggests that the new Carmelite was a rather cold-blooded person. Mademoiselle with her strong natural feeling touches one more, though it may be true, as she bitterly confesses, that indeed she ought to have rejoiced for her friend, so much the happier of the two. Writing long afterwards, in her crowded solitude among the woods of Saint-Fargeau, she concluded the sad little story as her

constant heart dictated: "Quant à l'amitié que j'ai pour elle, elle durera autant que ma vie."

It was not many months since a sadder heart than Mademoiselle d'Épernon's had taken refuge with the Carmelites. The flattering jargon of the day gave most fashionable women credit for beauty; one may safely guess that very few could really claim that supreme gift. There are many witnesses to prove that Mademoiselle Marthe du Vigean was one of these. She was the younger daughter of that tiresome gentleman whom Mademoiselle, once upon a time, innocently conveyed to the Château de Richelieu. Her mother, always the Duchesse d'Aiguillon's friend and slave, had by this influence been able to push herself and her two girls in a society hardly theirs by right of birth, the family of Vigean being "peu de chose." The sisters danced in Louis XIII's ballet at the Louvre, when Mademoiselle was eight years old. The elder one, Anne de Fors du Vigean, was made for success in life, and attained it brilliantly. She was pretty, gentle, insinuating, ambitious. Mademoiselle thought her *bourgeoise* and *tracassière*. Her first marriage to M. de Pons was no great thing, but he died when she was still quite young, and her second marriage with the young Duc de Richelieu, Madame d'Aiguillon's nephew, though it displeased his aunt, and even if he was the poor fool Mademoiselle calls him, gave her an assured position at Court for the rest of her life.

"Marton, la douce pucelle"—so the excellent Conrart wrote of her—was in every way a finer being than her sister. She was as proud as she was lovely; incapable of scheming in her own interest or any other. For a few months, when she was seventeen, a brilliant destiny seemed to open before her: the Duc d'Enghien, at nineteen, fell passionately in love with her. But Cardinal de Richelieu still reigned, and he had arranged to put the finishing point on his power by marrying his niece into the royal family. The Prince de Condé, too, saw his advantage in this match between his son and Mademoiselle de Maillé-Brézé. So

the Duc d'Enghien was married in 1641 to the wife he consistently made miserable.

The love affair went on for several years, before the eyes of the Court; but not the most evil of tongues could find a word to say against Mademoiselle du Vigean. Everybody knew that she was the only woman the great Condé ever really loved. His passion for her carried him to the length of doing his best, after Richelieu's death, to get his marriage with Claire-Clémence annulled by the Pope, that he might marry her. His mother and sister, to their own discredit and the Queen's displeasure, did their best in his cause. But his father and Mazarin were against him, and Marthe du Vigean remained beyond his reach.

At last the hero of many victories resolved to give up this most desired of all his conquests. There was no middle course for him, and he became as cold and distant as he had been passionate. The Court watched the change with interest, and at least two men of high birth and character, who had been held back by the terror of Condé, came forward and offered marriage to Mademoiselle du Vigean. She would listen to no one. After some months of disillusion and despair, having burnt Condé's letters and his portrait, she determined to leave the world she cared for no longer.

It was not a new idea to her, though she had never willingly encouraged it. One day, we are told, St. Vincent de Paul came to visit Madame du Vigean, who was ill. When he left the house, Mademoiselle Marthe attended him politely to the door. Father Vincent looked into the lovely face, perhaps already wearing the spiritual look of those who are not to find their happiness here, and said, "Mademoiselle, you are not made for the world." Marthe answered hastily that she had no turn for the religious life. Fearing the power of his saintliness, she begged him not to pray that she might change her mind. He went away without another word. What his prayers may have been, nobody knows. But when at twenty-four, "gaillarde et résolue,"



LOUIS, PRINCE DE CONDÉ

the Carmelites received her, the Marquis du Vigean in his fury threatened to kill not only that whole community, but all missionary priests as well.

When Mademoiselle visited her cousin at the convent, in the autumn of 1648, Sœur Marthe de Jésus might be seen kneeling through many hours, motionless and ecstatic, in the high silent choir. "And I would not change my condition," she said, "to be empress of all the world."

It is as a man of twenty-seven, his fame as a soldier made, the romance of his life over, that the great Condé marches on the scene of the Fronde. Madame de Motteville's portrait of him about this time is not altogether attractive. That haughty and rather mocking air of superiority to all the world, which disgusted Mademoiselle in the whole family, had become accentuated in the new Prince since the days when he learned manners at the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Soldiering had roughened and flattery had spoiled him; his young wife was nothing to him; no flirtation or intrigue held him long. The fainting-fit which marked his final parting with Mademoiselle du Vigean was the last sign of deep feeling Condé ever showed. He now mocked at gallantry and renounced balls, though his dancing was of the best.

"He was not handsome," says Madame de Motteville: "the shape of his face was ugly. His eyes were blue and quick and proudly glancing. His nose was aquiline; his mouth was very disagreeable, large, with projecting teeth; but in his whole countenance there was something striking and grand, the high look of an eagle. He was not tall, but his figure was perfect. He danced well, and had an agreeable air, a haughty bearing, and a fine head. His looks depended much on careful dressing, curling, and powdering; but he neglected himself . . . his face being long and thin, this negligence was a great disadvantage to him. It was caused by the loss of Mademoiselle du Vigean; after she entered the convent, he was utterly indifferent to everything."

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Condé might be indifferent to Court and Parliament alike, but neither of them was by any means indifferent to him. Both were anxious to secure the support of the great Captain. During that autumn of constant doubt and alarm, between flights of the Court from Paris, hasty returns, struggles with the Parliament becoming ever more difficult under the shadow of threatened riots, the Queen-Regent and Mazarin tried to flatter Condé by asking his advice in their difficulties. The Prince gave cautious answers advising moderation. Her Majesty had better not come to extremities with the Parliament, he thought, though she must of course maintain the King's authority. Mazarin was dissatisfied with this sort of reply, and the arrest of the Comte de Chavigny, son of M. Bouthillier and governor of Vincennes, for his sympathies with the opposition, was partly caused by suspicion of Condé. In the fierce parliamentary debates of October, however, Condé was with the Duke of Orléans on the royal side.

"My name is Louis de Bourbon, and I will do nothing to shake the crown."

With the army of France at his back, Monsieur le Prince made this answer to the friends and relations who invited him to join their constantly strengthening cabal against Mazarin.

Paris was seething with hatred of the Cardinal. The streets were full of *mazarinades*, songs and pamphlets full of ridicule, insult, and abuse, not only of Mazarin himself, but of "Dame Anne" the Queen. All through that autumn a spark would have been enough to set Paris once more in a blaze of street fighting. And the great were throwing in their lot with the small. The Cardinal was blamed for every personal disappointment of every man or woman who wanted anything. It was a mere chance that Monsieur was not even then at the head of the Frondeurs; he had been furious that the Abbé de la Rivière had been refused the Cardinal's hat which was promised to the Prince de Conti; and it was rather cowardice than loyalty that still kept him true, after a

fashion, to the King his nephew. Relations between the Luxembourg and the Palais Royal were painfully strained.

The party of the Fronde—a word borrowed from the leather sling and stones with which children used to fight each other in the ditches of Paris—was very far from being confined to those who honestly supported the claims of the Parliament. Nearly all the clergy of Paris were influenced by M. le Coadjuteur, to whom his uncle the Archbishop gave a free hand. Among the princes and nobles who openly or secretly took the same side were the Duc de Beaufort, not long escaped from his prison at Vincennes, and now once more the darling of the people; the Duc and Duchesse de Longueville, followed blindly by the Prince de Conti; the Prince de Marcillac, who had quarrelled with the Court because the Queen would neither give his wife a *tabouret* nor his coach the right of entry into the courtyard of the Louvre, and who now made use of his love-affair with Madame de Longueville to entangle her and her family—Condé excepted—in the hopeless confusion of the Fronde.

Mademoiselle's opinions were openly expressed, and the relations between her and the Regent did not improve. Anne had never liked her wilful, outspoken niece, and she was now almost too impatient of her wrong-headedness to treat her with civility. Since the Saujon affair she had considered her *brouillonne*, a tiresome, meddling, unmanageable girl, on whom reasons of state had little influence, and who occupied herself a great deal too much with her own precedence and her own future. The Queen's stiff Spanish ideas were offended by Mademoiselle's "vivacity, which deprived her actions of the gravity necessary to a person of her rank." The presence of this indiscreet Princess at Court must have been like a high fresh wind blowing through all dissimulations, diplomacies, and small etiquettes. She was a constant annoyance to the Queen, who yet could not possibly ignore her; a girl of royal birth, possessed, as Madame de Motteville says, of "beauty, wit, riches, and virtue."

When the Court slipped away that autumn to Rueil, and

afterwards to Saint-Germain, from the unfriendly spirit in Paris, Mademoiselle was much offended that she alone, of all the royal family, had no summons to accompany it. Madame la Princesse carried off her grandson, the Duc d'Enghien; Monsieur sent for Madame and her little girls, without a word to his eldest daughter. She and Philippe, the little Monsieur, ill of small-pox at the Palais Royal, were the only royalties left in Paris. She thought it her duty, however, to follow the Queen, and found herself a rather unwelcome guest at Saint-Germain. She was happier indeed in Paris, where the *frondeurs* welcomed her in the streets.

Still, at this time, she took no active part in politics. She did not at all care to throw herself into the arms of Madame de Longueville's party, or to make common cause with the *canaille*. Also her own revived ambition of years seemed to make an understanding with Mazarin desirable. These people—her father, the Queen-Regent, the Cardinal—had not cared to interest themselves in marrying her to the Emperor. They were ready to throw her and her fortune away on the Prince of Wales, who would never, as far as appearances went, be King of England. She would show them who it was they were treating in this cavalier manner. She would marry Louis XIV, and as a popular Queen of France she would touch the best that life could offer. In the region of Mademoiselle's lofty conceptions, a difference of eleven years in age mattered not at all. At the same time, political ends set aside, she had now and always a real affection and reverence for the stately little King.

Cardinal Mazarin was clever enough to play with the idea; he favoured it, indeed, to a certain extent; and it was her final loss of faith in him which threw Mademoiselle violently and definitely on the side of the Fronde.

CHAPTER III

1649

“Que vous nous causez de tourment
Fâcheux Parlement !
Que vos arrests
Sont ennemis de tous nos interests !
Le Carnaval a perdu tous ses charmes !
Tout est en armes,
Et les amours
Sont effrayés par le bruit des tambours.

“La guerre va chasser l’amour,
Ainsi que la cour ;
Et dans Paris
La peur bannit et les jeux et les ris.
Adieu le bal, adieu les promenades,
Les sérénades ;
Car les amours
Sont effrayés par le bruit des tambours.”

A ROYAL FLIGHT—THE PARLIAMENT AND THE PRINCES—THE ADVENTURES OF MADAME DE MOTTEVILLE—THE BLOCKADE OF PARIS—THE COMTE AND COMTESSE DE MAURE

ON the eve of the Feast of the Three Kings, January 5th, 1649, Mademoiselle supped with her stepmother at the Luxembourg. Monsieur was in bed with an attack of gout, a frequent resource of his when public affairs were too troublesome. The quarrels between the Court and the Parliament as to taxes and prerogatives became each day more serious, and Paris was angry and uneasy. “Point de Mazarin !” was the one cry in the streets. The Queen had taken counsel with her brother-in-law ; a great resolution had been arrived at suddenly, and Gaston, who hated all these worries, lay in bed thinking about it.

Some one of the household told Mademoiselle that they were all going away the next morning.

"And Monsieur in this state!" she cried. "Impossible!" and went laughing to his room with the news.

His only answer was to wish her a good night.

She flew to Madame, who, absorbed by her health and her babies, apparently knew and cared little about the matter. They talked it over, however, and agreed that Monsieur's silence was suspicious. Mademoiselle drove back later to the Tuileries through streets only disturbed by the merry-making of the festival.

At the Palais Royal, that same evening, "Dame Anne" was playing Twelfth Night games with her little boys and Madame de Motteville. Two or three ladies—Madame de la Trémouille, Madame de Gramont, Mademoiselle de Beaumont—whispered that there was something in the wind. The Queen surprised her people a little by sending for her chief equerry, M. de Beringhen, before she went to bed. But her perfect calmness and naturalness deceived them all. Her immediate attendants, Madame de Motteville, her sister Mademoiselle Bertaut, and another lady, enjoyed the remains of the royal supper as usual, talked of *bagatelles*, said good night to the gentlemen in waiting and the captain of the guard, and went to bed without any real suspicion of the early waking in store for them. The Queen only trusted those few on whom she depended for escorting the royal family out of the city of Paris—no longer, in her view and that of Mazarin, to be trusted with the guardianship of its King.

"Between three and four in the morning," says Mademoiselle, "I heard a loud knocking at my door. I guessed what it meant, woke my women, and sent them to open it. M. de Comminges appeared. I asked him, 'Am I not to go?' He answered, 'Yes, Mademoiselle. The King, the Queen, and Monsieur await Your Royal Highness at the Cours. Here is a letter from Monsieur.' I took it and pushed it under my pillow. I said, 'It was not necessary to add Monsieur's orders to those of the King and Queen.' He begged me to read it; it was only to require my speedy obedience."

"J'étois toute troublée de joie," Mademoiselle says. She was rejoiced to think that her enemies at Court were making a great mistake in this flight from Paris, which she regarded as the beginning of miseries. The King's person was never in danger, she says; nobody could or would have hurt him. She did not then foresee her own part in all that was coming; but looking back long afterwards on the vengeance she so much enjoyed, she observes that vengeance of this kind is apt to recoil on one's own head.

That January morning gave no time for reflection. She would not wait for her own coach, or for Madame de Fiesque, but started off with Comminges through the streets, dimly lit by an occasional lantern and the setting moon. At the Cours-de-la-Reine she found the royal coach waiting, and scrambled in, not without exchanging sharp words with the Queen as to her proper seat. She would not now quarrel for precedence with Madame la Princesse *mère*, but nothing would induce her to yield an inch to Condé's young wife. Both these ladies were in the coach; there were also the Prince de Conti and Madame de Senecé, the King's governess, besides the two sleepy boys and their royal mother.

Other coaches that rumbled up to the rendezvous contained the whole Orléans family from the Luxembourg, the Prince de Condé and his friends, the baby Duc d'Enghien, Cardinal Mazarin with some of his art treasures—his nieces, the little Martinozzi and Mancini girls, having been sent to a convent for safety. There were also as many courtiers, and people in the service of the King or the Cardinal, as could possibly in any sort of conveyance join the royal family's hurried flight. Many private owners of coaches, too, suddenly resolved to visit their country-houses, and the roads out of Paris were soon crowded: lucky those who did not delay long enough to be stopped by angry citizens at the gate. To escape was the one idea; to escape from the city; for report ran that the royal anger had severe punishment in store for it. The Queen had been heard to say that

if she had her will she would besiege Paris and starve it in a fortnight.

Among the few great personages who refused to leave Paris in that morning of trouble and terror was the Duchesse de Longueville. At the moment, no one at all realised the part that this lovely and languid but adventurous creature was going to play. She perhaps already saw herself Queen of Paris. But even her mother was obliged to accept the excuse she made : her state of health would not allow her to travel.

Mademoiselle had never seen the Queen so gay as in that journey to Saint-Germain. When the royal party arrived there, still in the early morning, they went at once to hear Mass. This duty done, they spent the rest of the day in a tumult of tongues. People were constantly arriving from Paris, and were eagerly questioned as to how things were going there. All through the city drums were being beaten, and the *bourgeois* were being called to arms.

Meanwhile, the self-banished Court was uncomfortable enough, though Mademoiselle, for one, made very light of her privations. She had no baggage, not even a change of linen, and not so much as a mattress to sleep on, for the royal palaces, when uninhabited, were empty of everything but tables and chairs. She was obliged to borrow a waiting-maid from Madame, and to sleep on the floor with the eldest of her little half-sisters in a fine gilded room with unglazed windows. "Not very pleasant in the month of January." The child spent the night waking and being sung to sleep again, a fatiguing process. The next night Monsieur obligingly gave up his room and a camp-bed to Mademoiselle, who slept no better, however, being roused by such loud talking that she put her head through the curtains to see who was there. The room was full of men in buff-coats, and the surprise was mutual.

Monsieur paid his daughter compliments on her high spirits. Madame, it seems, took things differently ; the whole Court indeed was lamenting over its miseries. But to Made-

moiselle, a healthy girl, everything was fun. "I am a creature who minds nothing," she said. "I am quite above trifles." She was extremely pleased to hear, however, when Madame de Fiesque, shut up at the Tuileries, at last found the energy to send her a supply of necessities, that her baggage was allowed to pass out of the gates with marks of respect, while that from the Palais Royal was ignominiously turned back. She ventured on her popularity so far as to send her own carts into Paris, in charge of her page, a clever boy of fourteen, to fetch various goods for the Queen. The page had a triumphant success. He even visited the angry Parliament and brought back polite messages assuring Mademoiselle of its devotion. She was proud of her page, who was received in audience by the Queen and the Cardinal, and told them of all he had seen in Paris. He was known afterwards by the title Monsieur gave him, "the Ambassador," and was with his mistress through the later scenes of the Fronde.

The Queen-Regent ordered the Parliament out of Paris, and forbade the entry of any provisions, dead or living, into the city. The Parliament sent a deputation to Saint-Germain to reason with their Majesties. Tears were shed, even by the little King himself, but the Queen was implacable.

Then the Parliament, still careful to avoid any appearance of revolt against the King, issued a furious decree against Cardinal Mazarin, as a disturber of public peace, an enemy of the King and of the State, and the author of all present evils and disorders. He was ordered to leave the Court at once, and to be out of the kingdom in a week. That time expired, any one might kill him, and all persons were forbidden to give him help or shelter. The Parliament also summoned the citizens to arms, to defend the city and to escort the convoys of provisions threatened by the Queen.

Mademoiselle found herself in the curious position of being popular with both parties: the Queen had suddenly become kind and friendly; the Cardinal was obliging and

polite. Mademoiselle had no grievance against the Court, and the future royal marriage began to seem really probable. It would at any rate please the nation; no one felt more sure of this than Mademoiselle herself. Still, she was shrewd enough to refer Anne's present courtesies to the real reason: displeasure with the dowager Princesse de Condé.

For the Prince de Conti and the Duc de Longueville were two of the first among the long train of princes and nobles who slipped back secretly to Paris, a very few days after they had followed the Court to Saint-Germain, and placed their swords at the service of the Parliament. Their pretext, of course, was the service of the King; to deliver Louis from bad guardians and restore him to his faithful people; but in truth they were anything but disinterested. The Ducs de Bouillon, de Beaufort, d'Elbeuf; the Prince de Marcillac; Archbishop de Retz, in full chase after his cardinal's hat; they all, as well as Conti and Longueville and many smaller names, wanted something that Mazarin would not give them, and caught at this means to bring about his fall. They wanted money, too, no longer to be had from the Queen; and the Parliament began its resistance by taxing itself and all Paris with immense liberality, in order to pay soldiers to fight its battles. This stream of gold was easily turned into the pockets of the men who raised the troops and pretended to pay them. And these wild, impatient spirits wanted above everything excitement, and cared little enough for the ruin of their country and the sufferings of its poor people as long as they could have their full desire of fighting, intrigue, dash, and show.

Madame de Longueville, with her romantic passion for glory, was simply a woman of her own kind. She and Madame de Bouillon, taking up their abode at the Hôtel de Ville to the music of trumpets and violins, all Paris filling the Place de Grève with shouts and sobs when they appeared with their children on the balcony, made a brilliant and fascinating centre to the great town seething with war and misery.

The Queen-Regent did her best to punish Madame la Princesse, old friend as she was, for these demonstrations on the part of her daughter, son, and son-in-law. It was true that Condé remained steady, so far, on the side of the Court, whose chief hope he was at this time; but Conti was known to be the Princess's favourite son, and though she professed the deepest grief at her family's conduct, this was reason enough for suspecting her real sympathies. The Queen turned in a marked manner to Mademoiselle, who had never found her so amiable, with the easily gained object of giving displeasure to Madame la Princesse.

The persons attached to the Court who did not escape in its train had evil times to go through, for the gates were soon closed and the mob made the streets almost impassable. Madame de Motteville, left behind by her royal mistress, had a risky experience. She was unwilling to make the sudden start in the dark and to join in the rush to Saint-Germain without comforts of any kind. Neither did she wish to remain in the city, become so unfriendly and so dangerous. She and her young sister, Madeleine Bertaut, whose wisdom and goodness gained her at Court the nickname of *Socratine*, had an idea of escaping to her house in Normandy.

But they put off their departure too long. As they stole masked and on foot to the Porte St. Honoré, hoping to find a conveyance outside, they were surrounded and turned back by a crowd of poor people who forced them to take refuge in the Church of the Capuchins. They slipped out another way and appealed for help to the soldiers on guard, who drove them away with threats. They tried to take shelter in the Hôtel de Vendôme, but the porter shut the door in their faces. In the midst of a crowd armed with paving-stones wrenched up from the street, they ran along the Rue St. Honoré as far as the Church of Saint-Roch. High Mass was being celebrated, and they hastened to kneel before the altar. But music and incense and religious solemnity had no effect on the wretches who crowded after

them into the church. "A woman, more horrible than a fury, tore my mask from my face, crying that I was a *Mazarine* and must be killed and torn to pieces. As I am not naturally valiant, I was in very great fear."

Losing her head, poor Madame de Motteville begun to run out of the church, but Socratine wisely stopped her, and the curé of Saint-Roch, realising the situation, tried to silence the howling mob. He also sent for help to the nearest *corps-de-garde*, and the officers, not without difficulty, rescued the ladies and escorted them home.

After this adventure Madame de Motteville gave up all idea of leaving Paris, but begged the Queen of England to take her and Socratine, with their friend Mademoiselle de Villeneuve, under her protection at the Louvre. This Henrietta readily did. Shut up there with her youngest child, the little Princess, sometimes without either fire or food, she could give nothing but what she had—beautiful rooms with Court furniture. Madame de Motteville remained there thankfully till February 21st, when she received a passport to rejoin the Queen-Regent at Saint-Germain. She was still at the Louvre when Queen Henrietta received the crushing news of King Charles's execution.

For nearly two months Paris was partially blockaded by Condé with his army, and the misery and disorder were great. Nobody was safe, for the civil and military authorities, the Parliament and the nobles, soon began to disagree, and thieves and bullies had the mastery of the streets. With the cry of "A Mazarin," any innocent person might be fallen upon. People hid their valuables in cellars, for houses were searched, and heavy payments demanded from any one who possessed anything.

Food was dear and scarce. The generals of the Fronde made dashing sorties to protect convoys of bread and flour and herds of cattle; sometimes they brought them triumphantly in; sometimes they were driven back with the loss of a few lives, more or less valuable. To add to the discomfort of the city, the Seine was in flood, and all the lower



HENRIETTA MARIA OF FRANCE, QUEEN OF ENGLAND
FROM A PORTRAIT BY VANDYCK

streets were turned into canals. People went about in boats, and the poor inhabitants of these streets suffered terribly. The windows of the Louvre looked down upon a waste of grey water under the wintry sky. Paris had indeed lost its character for the time.

But though there was sadness enough for those who had to suffer and those who were able to think, the actual party of the Fronde went merrily on its way. The Hôtel de Ville, rather than the Vieux Palais, was now its head-quarters. Conti, young and handsome, but deformed, was Generalissimo of the forces; a mere figure-head, governed by his sister and the stronger brains of the party, but rather picturesque as antagonist to the great brother who had always despised him. He held reviews of the troops in the Place Royale, the windows crowded with ladies. The lightness and readiness of his men, their gay looks and fluttering ribbons, delighted everybody. The Duc de Beaufort, fair-haired and tall, rode about on a white horse, his hat covered with white plumes, admired by the mob and "king of the markets." During these days, Madame de Longueville's youngest child was born at the Hôtel de Ville, and was christened "Charles Paris" at Notre Dame, with the City of Paris as his godmother.

The Fronde had lost its serious parliamentary character since the spirit of society seized upon it. Everything now was *à la Fronde*: bread, hats, ruffles, fans, handkerchiefs, gloves, laces. Retz was delighted with a shopkeeper who made cords for his hat in the shape of a sling, the original *fronde*. Never was a fashion more violently taken up. For months Paris lived and dressed *à la Fronde* and read nothing but *Mazarinades*, very poor food from a literary point of view.

Two of the most picturesque among the many original people who lived in Paris through the Fronde and sympathised with it were the Comte and the Comtesse de Maure. She was an heiress, Mademoiselle Doni d'Attichy, partly Italian by birth. She had been one of Queen Marie

de Médicis' ladies, and was a constant guest at the Hôtel de Rambouillet and the most intimate friend of that other eccentric *précieuse*, the Marquise de Sablé. Her husband was a younger brother of the Duc de Mortemart, therefore of distinguished birth. Luckily, he shared many of his clever wife's peculiarities. They lived in the Place Royale, and were extremely popular in society, for he was the best of men, and she, with all her oddities, a generous, good, and noble-minded woman. Mademoiselle knew her well and esteemed her highly.

Monsieur and Madame de Maure had a way of arranging their lives to please themselves, quite independently of fashion. Most people were careful to avoid the country, with its bad roads and its darkness, during the winter months. M. de Maure always travelled *aux flambeaux*. He went into the country in November and returned to Paris in April; society did the contrary. He and his wife dined at all sorts of odd hours, seldom together, and much later than other people. In consequence of this, says a gossip of the time, "they only began to think of ordering their horses at six o'clock; it was two hours before they went out; their visits often began at eight o'clock in the evening. They were a bore to everybody they went to see; some were going to supper, others had already sat down, some were even going to bed, when Monsieur le Comte or Madame la Comtesse was announced. . . . And they get up so late that they can hardly find a Mass to attend."

The Marquis de Sourdis, in an amusing *portrait* of the Comtesse de Maure, after describing her heroic air like that of a Roman matron, concludes his flatteries: "One may truly say that Madame la Comtesse de Maure would be perfection, if only, like the rest of the world, she could live in obedience to the clock!"

During the winter of the first Fronde, contrary to their usual habit, M. and Madame de Maure were in Paris, and he, a cordial hater of Mazarin, was among the foremost of the Frondeurs. Though his military knowledge was not great,

he was all for sorties, for fighting, for attacking Condé and carrying the war out of Paris. He and Retz, it seems, argued against the more prudent of the leaders. The Mazarin party were never tired of ridiculing the Comte de Maure and his martial fury. Their *triolet*s show the lighter side of this "guerrette," as laughing gossips called it.

Je suis d'avis de batailler,
A dit le grand Comte de Maure ;
Il n'est plus saison de railler,
Je suis d'avis de batailler.
Il les faut en pièces tailler
Et les traiter de Turc à More.
Je suis d'avis de batailler,
A dit le grand Comte de Maure.

Buffle à manches de velours noir,
Porte le grand Comte de Maure ;
Sur ce guerrier il fait beau voir
Buffle à manches de velours noir !
Condé, rentre dans ton devoir,
Si tu ne veux qu'il te dévore.
Buffle à manches de velours noir
Porte le grand Comte de Maure.

Condé himself, they say, wrote the answer :—

C'est un tigre affamé de sang
Que ce brave Comte de Maure :
Quand il combat au premier rang
C'est un tigre affamé de sang.
Il se s'y trouve pas souvent
C'est pourquoi Condé vit encore.
C'est un tigre affamé de sang
Que ce brave Comte de Maure.

CHAPTER IV

1649-1651

"La Reine a dit en sortant de la ville :

'Je m'en ressouviendrai ;

'Sachez, Français, que je suis de Castille ;

'Que je me vengerai ;

'Ou bien j'aurai la mémoire perdue.'

Elle est revenue,

Dame Anne,

Elle est revenue.

"La Reine a dit : 'J'ai souffert en chrétienne

'Un si sensible affront ;

'Ja gagerois qu'avant que je revienne

'Ils s'en repentiront.'

Elle a, ma foi, sa gageure perdue ;

Elle est revenue,

Dame Anne,

Elle est revenue."

CHARENTON—THE LAST COLIGNY—THE PEACE OF RUEIL—MADEMOISELLE'S RETURN—THE QUEEN'S BALL—THE ARREST OF THE PRINCES—THE SIEGE OF BORDEAUX—MADEMOISELLE "FURIEUSEMENT FRONDEUSE"

THE most important post held by the Fronde in the outskirts of Paris was the village of Charenton, to the south-east of the Porte St. Antoine. A garrison of two thousand men was stationed here to protect one of the chief roads by which the peasants brought food into the city. The news that Condé was preparing to attack it caused great excitement in Paris, where there was plenty of warlike swagger but very little real courage or experience, except among the leaders. They were hardly prepared, with an undisciplined crowd of Parisian soldiers at their back, to march out and meet Condé and his veterans in the open field. "His camp followers were Cæsars and Alexanders

compared with their best men," says Madame de Motteville, who had seen both sides.

But Charenton was too valuable to be lost without striking a blow, and the generals sent a messenger to M. de Clanleu, the governor, bidding him hold out, for they would be with him at dawn. The army, amounting with the city guards to nearly fifty thousand men, began to march out of Paris at eleven o'clock on a bitterly cold February night. Frost had now succeeded flood, and the Seine was partly frozen over. At seven in the morning the rearguard was still loitering in the Place Royale. The vanguard had hardly come into line among the windmills on the heights of Fécamp, between Picpus and the river, with the valley between it and Charenton, when "Monsieur le Prince, the terror of the Parisians, like a torrent that carries away everything in its course, burst upon the entrenched and barricaded village."

The army of the Fronde literally looked on, while Condé with his ten thousand men and distinguished band of officers, among whom Monsieur was conspicuous, destroyed the garrison of Charenton. It resisted bravely, but was overpowered and cut to pieces. The governor, heroic but unlucky, refused quarter and died at his post. The whole affair was over in two hours. "The generals of the Fronde," says M. Henri Martin, "in spite of their enormous superiority in numbers, dared not hazard a pitched battle with the victor of Rocroy and Lens. They led their discontented troops back into Paris."

The citizens, crowding to the Porte St. Antoine, could hardly believe the news till they actually saw the soldiers returning, horse and foot in their thousands, without having struck a blow in defence of so precious a post as Charenton. No wonder the people raged and accused the generals of treason. M. le Coadjuteur, riding about in a grey suit with pistols, had some difficulty in keeping them quiet.

For Mademoiselle and her society, the chief interest of the Charenton affair was the death of Condé's cousin and lieutenant-general, Gaspard d'Andelot de Coligny, Duc de

Châtillon. He was a brilliant and extremely handsome young man, very popular at Court, and Condé's intimate friend. He was the brother of Maurice de Coligny, the victim of the Duc de Guise, and with the early deaths of these two ended the direct male line of the famous Admiral.

Gaspard had the merit of being a fine subject for gossip and story. Five years before his death he ran away with a lovely girl, Mademoiselle de Boutteville-Montmorency, and married her against the wishes of both families, he being a Protestant, though he afterwards changed his religion. The adventure was romantic. Mademoiselle de Boutteville was on her way to her elder sister's house in Paris, when at the very door a number of men seized her and carried her off to a coach with six horses in which d'Andelot was waiting. For her own credit, she cried out and pretended to struggle. One of her sister's servants, rushing to her help, was killed by d'Andelot's men. The two "amiable persons," as Madame de Motteville calls them, dashed out of Paris, mounted horses, and escaped.

There was a tragi-comic scene that evening at the Palais Royal, when Madame de Boutteville-Montmorency, with her cousin the Princesse de Condé, came screaming and dishevelled to the Queen-Regent to demand justice on "ce criminel" who had outraged her house by carrying off her daughter. Anne, however, was not inclined to interfere with the match—quite as good, from a worldly point of view, as a young lady without much fortune could expect.

And even Madame la Princesse turned against the distracted mother, when she found that her son the Duc d'Enghien was the moving spirit of the affair. The Maréchal de Châtillon had talked of marrying his son to Mademoiselle du Vigean, and d'Enghien, in fear of this, advised his friend to carry off the girl with whom he was passionately in love.

Society laughed and had very little blame for the lovers, but it was long before Madame de Boutteville forgave them. The marriage was not happy. Both husband and wife flirted outrageously, and he was the worst of the two.

Naturally, perhaps, society forgave him more easily than his wife did. Everybody was touched by the good end he made. Mortally wounded at Charenton, they carried him back to Vincennes to die. In his last moments, "cet aimable mari" begged his wife's pardon "in the most obliging terms" for the offence he had given her by "preferring other chains to hers."

Mademoiselle observes that those who went to console Madame de Châtillon found her "fort ajustée" in her bed. This did not suggest any deep affliction; in such a case, the Princess adds, "one cares for nothing." But Madame de Châtillon, now one of the supreme beauties of the Court, cared a good deal for the Duc de Nemours, the foolish husband of poor Mademoiselle de Vendôme, and he remained in "her chains" for the rest of his short life. She also flirted violently with the great Condé himself.

As to the war, the combat of Charenton did not immediately bring it to an end, though one of many causes which inclined the Parliament towards making peace with the Court. It showed what Condé could do, if he chose to attack the city of Paris with her incapable crowd of defenders.

And as those weeks dragged on, the better minds in the Parliament rebelled against the selfish, restless spirit and the greedy demands of the noble *frondeurs*. Messages and embassies began to pass between Saint-Germain and Paris. Stiff demands on both sides were moderated. The princes in Paris disgusted the Parliament by actual negotiations with Spain: to get rid of their enemy Mazarin they would even bring the enemy of France into the field. But, according to M. Martin, it was the shock given to the "bonne bourgeoisie" of Paris by the news of the death of the King of England which proved the greatest factor for peace. They had no intention at all of breaking with royalty or upsetting their old constitution. A tragedy so "enormous" showed them to what lengths civil war might lead a people.

There were riots when Paris found that the Queen did

not intend to yield her Minister to his enemies. But in reality the patched-up peace, made early in March, was a relief to all parties, except that of Madame de Longueville. The country all round Paris, and indeed all the north-west of France, was in a tragic state of devastation caused by Condé's army and the mercenary troops of Erlach and Digby, employed by Mazarin; the suffering, the starvation, were terrible. Christian charity was not lacking; but it could not overtake the effects of thoughtless cruelty. The letters of Mère Angélique give a heart-rending picture of desolation throughout these years of the Fronde.

The Court at Saint-Germain rejoiced sincerely when this first act of the civil war was over. In spite of the Queen's calm confidence, which had struck Madame de Motteville curiously enough when she returned to her from boasting Paris, every one had suffered keenly enough during the blockade. Winter weather in the great draughty palace without comforts, almost without necessaries: so Mademoiselle describes those very unpleasant weeks. "They tried to starve Paris," she says, "but Paris had abundance, while at Saint-Germain we were often short of food; for the troops in the country seized all the supplies, so that we were half famished." The decencies of life were seriously disturbed too. It was impossible to go into any correct mourning for King Charles I; the necessary draperies could not be had, either for persons or equipages.

Mademoiselle was the first of the royal family to return to Paris after the Peace of Rueil. Queen Anne was in no hurry to restore the King to his troublesome subjects. Mademoiselle was accompanied by two ladies of royal blood, with whom she had made friends at Saint-Germain: the Princesse de Carignan, sister of the late Comte de Soissons and wife of a Prince of Savoy, and her daughter Louise, Princesse de Courci, afterwards married to the Margrave of Baden. Madame de Carignan was an ugly, agreeable woman and a wonderful story-teller. Her pockets were always full of sugarplums, and Mademoiselle had all

her nation's love for them. Mademoiselle de Courci was clever and sensible. "When I wanted to be merry, I talked to the mother; when I wanted to be serious, to the daughter," says Mademoiselle.

Her entry into Paris was something of a triumph; the Parisians received her "avec grand applaudissement." She had earned their love afresh by a kind action which she does not record of herself. After Charenton, Condé's men threw their prisoners naked into the freezing Seine, telling them they might go to their Parliament. Mademoiselle, hearing of their distress, sent orders that they should be well clothed at her expense.

She stayed only a few days at the Tuileries, and then returned to Saint-Germain. Each day she paid a visit of condolence to the widowed Queen of England, whose quiet endurance of her sorrow was not easy to be understood by a girl without experience and with rather more than her share of the hardness of youth. The world of Paris flocked to the Tuileries. In her spare time Mademoiselle drove in the Cours-de-la-Reine, taking with her the young Duke of York, a very pretty boy, who was now with his mother at the Louvre. Mademoiselle found James a much more lively companion than his elder brother. Charles himself was again in France some weeks later, and the suit of "the King of England" was earnestly pressed on Mademoiselle, but she never, either now or later, listened to it with any favour.

The general amnesty of the Peace of Rueil was followed by some amusing scenes. The noble *frondeurs* and *frondeuses* went hurrying to Saint-Germain to pay their respects to the King and Queen. The Prince de Conti, their leader, was forced by his brother to embrace Cardinal Mazarin. He was then allowed to present his friends: the Duc de Bouillon, the Prince de Marcillac, the Comte de Maure, and others. Monsieur presented the Duc d'Elbeuf. The Duc de Longueville arrived, rather ashamed, from his disloyal occupation of stirring up Normandy against the Crown. Even the Duchesse, after all her exploits, was received with her step-

daughter by the Queen. Anne's manner to all these *fâcheux* was cold and grave; Mazarin showed his usual gentleness and his usual craft, arranging a marriage between his niece Laura Mancini and the Duc de Mercœur, elder son of the Duc de Vendôme. The only person refused admittance to Saint-Germain was Madame de Chevreuse, whom the amnesty had brought back to Paris. Among the very few who declined to appear there were Archbishop de Retz and the Duc de Beaufort.

Thus ended the first act of the Fronde; but it very soon became clear that the peace was nothing but a truce, and that nobody was satisfied. *Les grands*, rapacious as ever, did not give themselves away for nothing; they were determined to make a better bargain with the King than with the Parliament, and their demands were out of all reason. Condé, with his loyal professions, was as bad as any of them. Madame Arvède Barine finds some excuse for them in the fact that Richelieu, in his policy of levelling them down, had taught them to beg from royalty. Now "they begged with arms in their hands."

The Court did not return to Paris till the middle of August. It had been thought necessary to watch the never-ending frontier war from Compiègne. Mademoiselle was exceedingly bored by that grand entry, in which, to be sure, she was not the principal figure. The Parisians were wild with joy at the sight of their young King, a stranger to them since that fateful night in January. All the public bodies with an immense crowd of people met him at Saint-Denis. The heat was extreme. There were eight people in the Queen's coach, including Cardinal Mazarin and the Prince de Condé, and the progress lasted five hours—from three in the afternoon till eight in the evening. The streets echoed with "Vive le Roi!" Mademoiselle had a terrible headache. For the Queen-Regent it was a day of triumph; the city was in too good a humour even to cry "Point de Mazarin"; and she was personally welcomed with enthusiasm, even by the fishwomen and the market-people.



THE DUCHESSE DE CHEVREUSE AS A WIDOW
 AFTER A PORTRAIT BY FERDINAND

On September 5th, the King's eleventh birthday, the Queen gave a grand daylight ball with supper and fireworks at the Hôtel de Ville, to which all the distinguished persons of both parties were invited. The little King led off with his cousin, Mademoiselle, to everybody's admiration; and there were other striking couples, such as the Prince de Condé and Mademoiselle de Chevreuse, a dazzling young beauty returned from exile; Madame de Longueville (who had to ask for an invitation) and the Duc de Rohan; the Duc de Mercœur and his fiancée, Mademoiselle Mancini. She, by the by, was the eldest and much the best of Mazarin's nieces. Mercœur was an amiable man, much attached to her. He never recovered her early death, but took orders, and ended his days as a Cardinal.

During that autumn of 1649, Mademoiselle went through the horrible experience which destroyed so much beauty in those days: she had the small-pox. It treated her kindly, however; she kept her fine complexion, and came off easily with a few weeks' imprisonment. All the world crowded to inquire for her; its cards and notes were her only amusement. She noticed with indignation that the Prince de Condé was the one great personage who neglected this courtesy, "which deepened my aversion," she says. She met him soon after her recovery at the Palais Royal, when the King and his brother were confirmed. She and her father were godparents to Louis, he and his mother to Philippe. She was still further offended by his daring to joke with her, to accuse her of merely pretending to be ill. If he meant this for a compliment, it was not favourably received. Mademoiselle allowed him to see her displeasure.

The breach was every day widening between Condé and the Court. He was now reconciled with his family, and his demands for them and for himself were exorbitant. His fierceness and insolence, with the terrible state of the country—wars without and distress within—forced Mazarin to make a kind of treaty: no appointment was to be made in the Government, in the royal household, in the army, or in

diplomacy, without the Prince's advice ; his interests should be the Cardinal's first consideration ; he should be consulted as to the marriages of the Cardinal's nephew and nieces. The Cardinal's own influence may be measured by the fact that these were matters of high political importance.

In the nature of things, such a treaty could not last long. Condé took such advantage of it that he soon made the position impossible. The Queen and Mazarin had the support of Retz and the Parliament, as well as of the Duc d'Orléans, in their decision to arrest the three Princes—Condé, Conti, and Longueville.

This was a *coup d'état* of so risky a nature that Monsieur did not care to be mixed up in it openly, and we are not surprised to find that he had been in bed for two days when the arrest actually took place, on January 18th, 1650.

On that very day Mademoiselle went to see her father at the Luxembourg and reproached him for bearing with Condé's insolence so long. She spoke impatiently, passionately. "You ought to have him arrested!" she cried. Gaston answered, "Patience; you will soon be satisfied." A certain excitement in his sleepy manner convinced Mademoiselle that there was really something in the wind. She drove off to the Palais Royal and arrived there at a thrilling moment: frightened servants, closed doors, corridors full of soldiers, the Queen's room guarded by two men with carbines; a crowd in the ante-chamber, eagerly awaiting the end of a long sitting of the Council. It was over at last, and the Queen sent for Mademoiselle. "You are not sorry?" she said, and Mademoiselle rejoiced with her. M. de Guitaut and M. de Comminges, Captain and Lieutenant of the Guard, had arrested the three Princes as they left the Council, and were even now driving away with them, in a coach escorted by a few gendarmes, to the fortress of Vincennes.

The Parisians lighted bonfires and sang in the streets:—

C'est Condé, ce diable, qu'on mène
Ce dit-on, au bois de Vincennes. . . .

All Condé's friends fled in different directions. His mother

and his wife, with Madame de Châtillon and others, retired to Chantilly. Madame de Longueville first went with Marillac into Normandy, and then, finding herself insecure at Dieppe, escaped by sea and landed in Holland, where she and the Maréchal de Turenne made a private treaty with the Archduke Leopold: Spanish troops were to help in liberating the Princes. The Duc de Bouillon, Turenne's brother, as well as many other nobles, great and small, began at once to light up a flame of civil war in the provinces. There were risings in every direction. The fighting which had desolated the country neighbouring on Paris and on the frontier was now spread all over France, and the sufferings of the people during this Fronde of the Princes were far greater than any caused by the troublesome Parliament.

These were some of the first consequences of Mazarin's *coup d'état*, and many queer things were to happen before his policy justified itself. The next two years were full of kaleidoscopic changes in persons and parties. At first the Parliament and the Coadjutor, the Duc de Vendôme and the Duc de Beaufort, were on the royal side. Mazarin heaped favours and provinces on these former *frondeurs*. Paris was governed by the Duc d'Orléans, lieutenant-general of the kingdom. Leaving the city in these unsafe hands, the Court spent most of the year 1650 in progresses about the disturbed districts of the kingdom, not without a good deal of success in pacifying them, at least for the moment.

Mademoiselle had to attend the Queen on the journey into Normandy, which bored her very much, as the carnival was near, and all Paris was dancing. She was glad to return in time for a ball at the Luxembourg, but her pleasure was spoilt by the exasperating news that the Court was again leaving, this time for Burgundy. It was not only Monsieur who could be ill when it pleased him. Mademoiselle took a leaf out of his book of wisdom, and retired to bed with a sore throat, flying into "a horrible fury" with her faithful Saujon when he ventured to remonstrate. The sore throat answered its purpose, and Mademoiselle remained in Paris.

Early in July the Court started on a grand expedition to Bordeaux. The city had for some time been rebelling against the Duc d'Épernon, governor of Guienne, and it was easy enough for the young Princesse de Condé to light up the fire again. Her husband deserved little devotion from Claire-Clémence, but this quiet, delicate, neglected girl was certainly one of the bravest of the many women of rank who took an active part in these wars. After an adventurous escape with her little son from Chantilly, where the Princesses had been put under careful surveillance, she had been escorted to the south by Bouillon and Marcillac (now La Rochefoucauld) and had thrown herself upon the chivalry of the Bordelais, who received her with enthusiasm. She now held the place against the King's troops, demanding her husband's liberty as the price of surrender.

The Court, including Mademoiselle, established itself at Libourne while the army besieged Bordeaux; a mild siege, carried on indulgently by the Maréchal de la Meilleraye. Nothing is plainer in this confusion of civil war than Mazarin's moderation. Unlike his predecessor, he would win the nobles, not crush them. One has to confess that such cleverness deserved to succeed in the end.

The heat at Libourne was tropical. The Queen suffered from it, and lay on her bed all day, not dressing until the evening. Mademoiselle found life rather dull, with no occupation but writing letters and working tapestry. Later, when the Court moved to Bourg on the Dordogne, she spent hours at her window, watching the boats as they passed up and down.

There was plenty to occupy her mind, however. Undeterred by past experience, she was again at this time allowing Saujon secretly to negotiate her marriage with the Emperor, once more a widower. But the worthy Comminges, in whom she confided at Libourne, spoke his mind so plainly on the subject that although she could not recall Saujon, she was glad that his mission came to nothing. Rash, foolish, and self-willed, Mademoiselle could still always listen to the advice of a sensible man.

Another excitement was the birth of a half-brother, Monsieur's only legitimate son. This child did not live long ; but Mademoiselle declares that her joy at his birth was great and sincere. She rejoiced loudly, and the Court with her. "I wrote to their Royal Highnesses," she says, "in transports that might have softened rocks for ever." Monsieur and Madame sent affectionate answers. Mademoiselle was never again on such charming terms with her family.

She was also pleased and interested to find herself a person of political importance. Monsieur treated her as his representative at Court, and this became suddenly a post of honour, for Monsieur, influenced by Retz and the Parliament, took on himself the work of a peacemaker. Everybody was alarmed by the victorious advance of Turenne and Madame de Longueville. The Queen would have fought the matter through ; to her anything seemed better than the liberation of Mazarin's enemies. But she could not stop the course of events.

Mademoiselle found herself the centre of a new policy ; consulted by the Queen, who tried to drag her into intrigues on her own side ; flattered by Mazarin, who tried to persuade her that he was her father's best friend ; respectfully acknowledged by the deputies from Bordeaux, who came to Bourg to negotiate a treaty. Personally, Mademoiselle cared little for peace, and she feared, like Anne, the release of the hated Condé ; but loyalty to her father was always one of her strongest motives. She spoke her mind in favour of peace, both to the Queen and the Cardinal. He said, laughing, "You breathe *un air si bordelais* through those windows of yours, that I fear in the end it may make you *frondeuse*." It was not long before the Queen had occasion to say, "Mademoiselle devient furieusement frondeuse !"

Peace was made, Mademoiselle showing her sympathy with the deputies from Bordeaux. Madame la Princesse, grieved and disappointed, came to visit the Queen, bringing with her, besides her pretty little son, the Ducs de Bouillon

and de la Rochefoucauld. They were all exiled to their estates. No promises were made as to the release of the Princes. Two days later the Court sailed down the river to Bordeaux in beautiful weather, and entered the city on October 5th, to the clamour of cannon, musketry, and bells.

This entry was not a very great success, however, as far as the Queen and the Cardinal were concerned. The people of Bordeaux were suspicious of the army that lay about their gates and of the royal ships in the river. Mademoiselle was the only person who enjoyed real popularity; it is needless to say that she was pleased. She lodged in a fine house belonging to President de Pontac, who had married Mademoiselle de Thou, sister of the unhappy friend of Cinq-Mars. Everybody came to see her; her Court was much larger than the Queen's. The Parliament of Bordeaux insisted, in spite of Mazarin, on paying her the same honours as were paid to little Monsieur, the King's brother. On the whole she was enchanted with the city, its natural beauty, fine buildings, lively people. At the end of ten days, however, she was very glad to find herself once more on the road to Paris.

As the winter advanced, the plot thickened, and the confusion of parties became worse confounded. Monsieur, under the influence of Anne de Gonzague, wife of Edward, Prince Palatine (a younger son of the Elector Frederic and Elizabeth Stuart, "the Winter Queen"), as well as of Madame de Chevreuse and Madame de Montbazon, now on the side of the Princes, began to incline towards that party and to draw the Parliament in the same direction. The death of Madame la Princesse *mère*, and her magnificent funeral in the Church of the Carmelites, brought to people's minds the greatness of the Condé and Montmorency families, now deep in sorrow and disgrace. Mademoiselle herself, dancing as usual through the winter, grew every day more angry with Mazarin, who kept none of his fine promises to her. She called him a knave and a cheat. She

was delighted when her father quarrelled with him openly, and when a new cabal of the Fronde drove him out of France for the time. So changed were her feelings that when the Prince de Condé, set at liberty in February, 1651, came laughing back to Paris and was joyfully received by the changeable folk there, no one had a warmer welcome for her old enemy than La Grande Mademoiselle.

CHAPTER V

1651-1652

“ Adieu le bal, adieu la danse,
Adieu mesure, adieu cadence,
Tabourins, hautbois, violons,
Puisqu’à la guerre nous allons.”

FRIENDSHIP WITH CONDÉ—LA PRINCESSE PALATINE AND MADAME DE CHOISY—ROYAL MATCHES—CONDÉ IN ARMS—THE QUESTION OF ORLÉANS—A NEW “JEANNE LA PUCELLE”

IT seems that Mazarin could not do either of the two things that would have helped him most at this point of time. He could neither make the Coadjutor a Cardinal nor Mademoiselle de Montpensier Queen of France. His own strong prejudice hindered the former, the Queen-Regent's dislike and—according to Madame de Motteville—Mademoiselle's own peculiarities prevented the latter. Mazarin therefore had no means of buying over the Fronde, and he suffered a temporary eclipse, while Condé triumphed.

It was at the Luxembourg, on the evening of his arrival, after his reception by the whole city in the streets and by the unwilling Queen at the Palais Royal, that Mademoiselle had her first friendly talk with the hero. Polite communications had already passed between them through M. de Guitaut, the Prince's gentleman, nephew of the good Captain whose painful duty it had been to arrest him. They had acknowledged that their mutual detestation was unreasonable. Now, face to face, they continued their confessions with amusing frankness.

“He confessed to me,” says Mademoiselle, “that he had been delighted when I had the smallpox, and had hoped passionately that I might be marked or disfigured; in fact,

that he could not have hated me more. I told him that his imprisonment had been a joy to me, that I had heartily desired it, and that I had never thought of him without wishing him ill. This explanation lasted some time, delighted the company, and ended with the most friendly expressions on both sides."

It was suggested to Mademoiselle that, failing the Emperor or the King, the Prince de Condé would be a very suitable husband for her. They were of the same race, equals in blood. His great deeds and fine qualities might be set against her good looks and immense fortune. Such an alliance between Monsieur and Monsieur le Prince would make them redoubtable indeed, and would certainly give intense displeasure at Court.

There was one objection. Monsieur le Prince had a wife already. But in the course of that spring she fell grievously ill of erysipelas, and everybody thought she would die. Mademoiselle, prancing restlessly up and down her rooms in the late evening, talked the whole matter over and over again with her excellent secretary, M. de Préfontaine. It seemed that the same idea was besetting Condé, for instead of attending on his sick wife, he visited his cousin every day. But "the chapter ended suddenly," for Madame la Princesse recovered.

Mademoiselle cared little, one way or the other. Wild, thoughtless, *étourdie*, as she describes herself, amusement was the one object of her life during this year and the next.

In Paris, life was full of intrigue and excitement, social and political. People seem to have changed sides at every glimpse of personal advantage; society was one great gamble. There were those shrewd enough to doubt whether the Cardinal had disappeared for ever; whether he would not return with added power and beat the Princes in the end. For the air was full of plots in his favour, and at this very time, at the height of her uncle's disgrace, the Duc de Mercœur married Mademoiselle Mancini. The young King,

an unknown quantity as to character, was approaching his majority, but his mother still ruled him, and her affection for the Cardinal was unchanged. The Luxembourg, the centre of opposition, was beginning to lose its hold on Retz and the Parliament; but Mademoiselle, always conspicuous, always extreme, very popular in Paris and *furieusement frondeuse* on the side of Orléans and Condé, had become a formidable figure, to be reckoned with by all. She stood above the crowd of gamblers, really asking for nothing but the fun of the fair. Some of them thought it worth while, however, to dangle temptation within her reach.

Her excursions into the country that summer were unusually delightful. She had a charming set of companions: Madame de Frontenac—with whom, as Mademoiselle de Neuville, she had made friends at Pont-sur-Yonne three years before; the two sisters La Loupe, of a younger branch of the d'Angennes, M. de Rambouillet's family—lovely, young, fascinating, and not yet what they were afterwards, as Madame d'Olonne and Madame de la Ferté, a scandal even to the society of their day; Mademoiselle de Remecourt, with a genius for comedy, afterwards quenched among the Carmelites.

If Madame de Longueville was the most romantically warlike of the ladies of the Fronde, Madame la Princesse Palatine was the most politically clever. She seems to have felt in the course of that summer that the wind was changing slightly, and that the Queen-Regent's side might be the safest in the long run. Condé was indeed too violent, too uncertain, to inspire complete confidence in persons whose first interest was their own, and his relations with the Regent were now most unfriendly. Madame la Palatine seized on a slight pretext for quarrelling with him, and it was understood that she had made peace for herself with the Queen. But this was not enough for her active mind and her greedy desires.

She was very intimate with Madame de Choisy, who had always been devoted to her sister, the Queen of Poland.

(By the way, on the death of King Ladislas, a dispensation from the Pope had permitted Marie de Gonzague to marry his brother and successor, Casimir, the former suitor of Mademoiselle d'Épernon.) A certain good-for-nothing Secretary Bartet, agent of the King of Poland and a strong partisan of the Cardinal, was much in the confidence of both these ladies.

One day Madame de Choisy visited Mademoiselle, announcing that she had something important to say. When they were alone together, she began: "I am come to make your fortune."

Mademoiselle was amused, slightly scornful.

"That would be a strange thing to say to me, if any one but Madame de Choisy said it!"

Madame de Choisy went on to explain that the Sieur Bartet had been asking questions about Mademoiselle, and had ended by saying, "I want to make her Queen of France."

Mademoiselle listened attentively.

"You know," said Madame de Choisy, "men like Bartet are all-powerful at Court. They can do anything with the Cardinal, and he is master of the Queen; so I think the affair is hopeful."

She left Mademoiselle to consider the suggestion, and to realise that Mazarin's return must be a condition of her attaining the *couronne fermée*. A few days later she came again, full of a fresh development. Madame la Princesse Palatine, far cleverer and far more powerful than M. Bartet, was ready to give her help, for a consideration.

"Elle est gueuse," said Madame de Choisy. "She is a bold beggar. If she arranges the affair, you must give her three hundred thousand crowns."

Mademoiselle made no objection.

"And you must make my husband your chancellor," the lady went on. "We shall have a merry time. La Palatine will superintend your household, with a salary of twenty thousand crowns. She will sell all appointments; so you

can judge that your interest will be hers. We shall have *la comédie* every day at the Louvre; she will govern the King."

"It can be imagined," Mademoiselle says to her readers, "how charmed I was with the idea of such dependence, proposed to me as the greatest pleasure in the world." She listened with incredulous wonder, as Madame de Choisy went on.

"The King will be of age in a fortnight; you can be married a week later. La Palatine will make this proposal to Monsieur, with that of the Cardinal's return. He will be too much rejoiced at the former not to grant the latter."

Mademoiselle was extremely doubtful. First, she seems oddly to have thought that Monsieur would be bound by his promises; second, she reminded herself that he had never lifted a finger to forward any marriage for her. Madame de Choisy's eager assurances did not convince her; and it is pleasant to know that she absolutely refused to grant Bartet a private interview. She might listen to plotters and schemers with a certain amused favour; but they could not lead her far along their dishonourable track.

Madame de Motteville declares that the same kind of temptation had been set before Mademoiselle some months earlier, when the Duke of Orléans first sided with the Princes against the Cardinal. Mazarin then sent one of the Queen's maids of honour to offer the young King's hand to Mademoiselle, on condition that she would separate her father from the Prince de Condé. The odd creature, for some reason of her own, laughed the bribe away.

Madame de Motteville says that neither she nor her father ever really knew how to act for their own advantage.

"Mademoiselle," she says, "with much wit, brilliancy, and capacity, and a desire for a royal crown, has never known how to say Yes at the right moment. Some passing fancy has always conquered her own real feelings and wishes. When she might have had what she wanted most, she has never accepted it."

The truth seems to be that a certain pride, as well as a



MADemoisELLE DE MONTPENSIER
FROM A STEEL ENGRAVING

certain sentiment, took possession of Mademoiselle's mind whenever the question of *le petit mari* of her childhood was immediately in presence. If we judge her rightly, she was not going to climb any back stairs that might lead to the throne of France.

Her idea seems to have been that the boy King himself, certain to marry early, might prefer a marriage with a cousin he knew and liked, though eleven years older than himself, to a marriage with a strange princess, if also a cousin. Even then people were talking of the Infanta of Spain as a probable Queen of France. That way lay European peace, and Mademoiselle herself saw that the Spanish match was the best of all. Putting it aside, she considered herself the next best, both politically and socially. But she would have liked to become Queen by her own personal attractions, by the King's affection for her and the pleasure he took in her company, rather than through any clever negotiations of Madame la Palatine and Madame de Choisy. There seems nothing strange or unworthy in this, even if the circumstances and Mademoiselle's own eccentricity made it all rather absurd. There is not of course the slightest evidence that Louis, a shy boy of thirteen, ever faced the idea of marrying his tall and dashing cousin; and it is certain that his mother's inmost mind was strongly set against any such plan.

During that autumn Mademoiselle found herself constantly beset by suitors and flatterers. Her fortune, if not herself, was a valuable ally that nobody could afford to neglect. Charles II, once more in France, pressed his suit with his mother's help and Monsieur's half-hearted approval. Madame de Fiesque tried to influence Mademoiselle in his favour, pointing out what a good deed she might do by converting him from Protestantism. The Duchesse d'Aiguillon argued strongly on the same side; so did that lovely flirt, the Duchesse de Châtillon, from other motives of her own.

But the more the English match was pressed upon Mademoiselle, the more clearly she saw its disadvantages,

not only for herself, but for her father. Other friends warned her that even her enormous fortune would not go far in conquering England; that when it was all spent, and spent in vain, she might die of hunger; that Charles himself might die, and she would then find herself the most wretched Queen in all the world, dependent on her father. Unluckily, man as boy, Charles did not succeed in touching his cousin's romantic side, and she very soon found herself embarked on an enterprise which suited her much better than the conquest of England.

France was once more flaming with civil war, lighted up by the Prince de Condé, this time, for his own selfish ends. Finding that, Mazarin or no Mazarin, he could not govern the kingdom to please himself, he and his friends took up arms in the south-west, burning and ravaging the miserable country. An alliance with Spain made him more formidable. The King's army followed him into the provinces. There was fighting in every direction. Mazarin appeared with an army on the north-east frontier, and soon joined the Court at Poitiers with a number of nobles and officers, among whom Bouillon and Turenne were the most distinguished. They, with many others, had ranged themselves on the royal side since the early days of the Fronde.

It was a stormy winter. Paris and the Parliament were wild with rage at the Cardinal's return. They set a price upon his head, and took the meaner revenge of breaking up his art collections and selling his library of precious books. Parties were torn in pieces, for there was a moment when the keenest *frondeurs* shrank from the definite rebellion and civil war meant by joining Condé, however they might hate and resist Mazarin. The Parliament, on consideration, decided only to "remonstrate" with the King, and to induce the provincial parliaments to do the same. Retz saw his interest in going a little further along the road of moderation, and accepting the inevitable as he now saw it in the shape of Mazarin. In the course of a few weeks he received his red hat, the object of his ambition.

But Condé had still a very strong party in Paris, as well as in the provinces, and Gaston d'Orléans was its chief. He hastily collected the troops dependent on him and placed the Duc de Beaufort at their head. They, with other armies in northern France, were ready to co-operate with Condé and Madame de Longueville in the south. One army was partly formed of Spanish troops from Flanders, under the Duc de Nemours; another was raised in Anjou by the Duc de Rohan. All through that spring of 1652 the wretched provinces were ravaged by marching and fighting bands, many of them foreign mercenaries of the most savage kind. Angers was besieged and taken by the royal forces. Beaufort and Nemours, marching to its relief, did not arrive in time.

The King's army began to advance towards Orléans, Monsieur's own *apanage*, and therefore most important to the prestige of the Fronde; but its loyalty to its suzerain was doubtful. It seemed that the Duke's own presence was necessary to make the citizens of Orléans see their duty. Rohan and Nemours left their commands and hurried to Paris to lay the matter before him.

But Monsieur did not wish to leave Paris. His excuse was, that the cause of the Princes there depended on his presence; but he vexed Mademoiselle to tears by his complaints of being persecuted by his party, his longings for the repose of Blois, his envyings of the lucky people who meddled in nothing.

A few hours later she was wildly joyful at the thought, suggested by eager friends, that she might be sent to take his place at Orléans.

It was Palm Sunday, the 24th of March. Mademoiselle had intended to drive out that day to Saint-Denis, to spend Holy Week at the Carmelite convent there. She put off going till the next day, to see what might happen, and attended a sermon at the Capuchin church in the Rue St. Honoré, preached by the famous *frondeur*, Père Georges. His sermons against the Regent and the Cardinal were so

"insolent," and had such an effect on Paris, that the Court had set up a powerful opposition preacher, Père Le Boults, on its own side.

Mademoiselle, anxious and hopeful, spent the rest of the day at the Luxembourg, her father in a state of nervous, restless irresolution. It was not till late in the evening, after she had returned to the Tuileries, that the Duc de Rohan arrived with Monsieur's commands: Mademoiselle was to go to Orléans. So she entered on the most exciting experience of her life, the adventure by right of which she lives in history.

It was two o'clock on Monday morning, the Feast of the Annunciation, before she went to bed, and she was in church at seven, asking God's blessing on her enterprise. Some hours were spent at the Luxembourg, where all the world of the noble Fronde came crowding to wish Mademoiselle a good journey. Each one, as usual, had his own political and personal ends in view, and they all saw their own brilliant fortunes in those of Mademoiselle.

Madame de Châtillon, changing her English note of a few months earlier, as became the adored of M. de Nemours and the intimate friend of Condé, assured Mademoiselle of the "passion" of all three "for her service" and their strong desire to make her Queen of France. It was their private intention, she declared, to make this a condition of peace. Nothing, Monsieur le Prince thought, could be better for the nation, for Mademoiselle and her family, and for himself. Mademoiselle was evidently pleased. When this last act of the civil war broke out, it had occurred to her that a crown might fairly be won on battle-fields, though not by backstairs intrigues, and that the bribe Madame la Palatine had asked for would be better employed in openly fighting the Cardinal. She had therefore sent a message to the Princess through Madame de Choisy, politely and definitely declining her offers. Madame de Châtillon's idea, though not quite new, was much more suitable to her lofty temper.

However, when the lovely lady begged to accompany her

to Orléans, she did not consent. People would talk, because of M. de Nemours, she reflected. Besides, awkwardly enough, the Duchesse de Nemours had expressed the same wish; "if she had come, I know her husband would have been in despair." So Mademoiselle shook off these ladies, received her father's few parting instructions, and mounted her coach in the court of the Luxembourg, attended only by her favourite Madame de Frontenac and by Madame de Bréauté and Madame de Fiesque, daughter and daughter-in-law of her governess.

She was a splendid figure in her plumed hat and riding-dress of grey and gold. Her coach, with its escort of a dozen men commanded by a lieutenant of Monsieur's guards, left the palace in the midst of a crowd calling down blessings on her head; all through the streets the people were shouting, "Point de Mazarin!"

The start having been made at three in the afternoon, the first stage from Paris was a small town then called Châtres, now Arpajon. Here she slept, but very early in the morning she was on the road again, so early that the Duc de Beaufort, riding hard from Paris to overtake her, was only in time to ride on at her coach-door. At Étampes they dined together; and a few miles beyond this she was met by a troop of five hundred horse told off from the army as an escort of honour.

On the wide high plain of the Beauce in the fresh bright air, larks singing in glorious weather, distant cathedral spires shining as now in sunny distance, with the tramp of horses, the gay ringing of bridles, the flash of steel and glow of colour all round about, it is not surprising that Mademoiselle's coach could contain her no longer. Luckily, at the right moment, something broke in its lumbering machinery, so that there were no difficulties of etiquette. Mademoiselle mounted joyously on horseback and rode on with her delighted troops; this indeed was something like the game of war. She gave her orders; she stopped couriers and confiscated their despatches. One of them was from

Orléans, and brought the exciting news that the royal army was not far off.

The army of the Princes was at Toury, and here Mademoiselle was received by the Ducs de Nemours and de Rohan and other generals, and was invited to preside at a council of war. At first she laughed at the notion; but very soon she took it rather too seriously to please the generals. They, especially Beaufort and Rohan, gave themselves airs of knowing Monsieur's military plans better than she, his daughter, who had received special instructions from him. She spoke out her displeasure plainly. All these fine young men, even the proud and obstinate Beaufort, appear to have bowed before her, promising to carry out her orders. It was arranged that the army should take up a strong position on the Loire, without crossing it, so as to prevent the royal forces from doing so. In the meanwhile Mademoiselle herself would post on to make sure of Orléans. All kinds of false and contradictory rumours had made their way through from that undecided city: the King was already there; the governor had been arrested, and so forth. Actually as to the governor, the clever old Marquis de Sourdis, not even Monsieur, in these confused days, knew positively whether he was for Mazarin or for the Princes.

Mademoiselle, wildly impatient, started so early on Wednesday morning that her escort was not ready. Indeed, her untrustworthy cousin Beaufort had forgotten to order it; so he said, at least. It seems not impossible that her mission was distrusted by both sides. The honest, straightforward intentions of a princess rash in word and deed hardly suited the crowd of selfish princes, who were almost as ready to make a bargain with the King and Mazarin as to quarrel among themselves.

Mademoiselle dashed on with her own small escort, but had not gone half-way when she was met by a gentleman from Orléans, M. de Flamarens. He was charged with many messages, and Mademoiselle stopped at a wayside inn to receive them. It appeared that the worthy Orléanais were

in a terrible state of mind. It was a case of "a plague o' both your houses." They had an equal terror of the two armies. The King was not far off, and they were afraid to enrage him by receiving Mademoiselle. Would she therefore be good enough to lodge in some neighbouring château, pretending illness, till the King and his army had passed by? They promised that he should not be received into the city, and that Mademoiselle personally would be welcome, as soon as he was clear away. They begged, however, that no princes and no army might accompany her.

Mademoiselle was not moved by these messages.

"I am going straight on to Orléans," she said. "If they shut their gates at first, I shall not be discouraged. If they let me in, my presence will strengthen those who are well disposed and will bring back those who are not. Nothing inspires the people more than to see persons of my quality expose themselves to danger, and they are almost sure to submit to any one with a little resolution. If the Mazarin cabal is the strongest, I shall hold out till I am fairly driven back to the army. The worst that can happen is arrest. In that case, I shall be in the hands of men who speak my language, who know me, and even in captivity will show me the respect due to my birth. Indeed, I dare to say that such an adventure in Monsieur's service will teach them to venerate me all the more."

And so, without listening to another word, Mademoiselle got into her coach, and with her ladies, her "maréchaux de camp," as Monsieur called them, hurried on at full speed and reached Orléans at eleven o'clock in the morning on Wednesday, March 27th.

She had a secret reason for haste, which she did not confide to her companions till the adventure was at its height. Before she left the Luxembourg on Monday, the Marquis de Vilaine, known as a clever astrologer, had whispered a prediction in her ear. "From Wednesday at noon till Friday, everything you undertake will succeed. And during that time you will do something extraordinary."

At first the affair did not look hopeful. The city gate at which she arrived was closed and barricaded. Her name had no magic to open it. After three hours of tiresome waiting in her coach, she and her small suite, including a few gentlemen, descended at an inn outside the walls; it was called the Port-de-Salut, she says, a name of good omen. But she could not rest there long. In spite of prudent objections made by the gentlemen, she and her ladies, with two or three of her men, set out to walk along the ditch that bordered the walls. The ramparts were covered with people shouting, "Vive le roi, les princes, et point de Mazarin!" Mademoiselle scandalised her companions by crying out in answer, "Go to the Hôtel de Ville and make them open the gate!" But Orléans only acknowledged her presence by a polite offering of bonbons from the governor, whose son, the Marquis d'Alluye, watched her movements from a window above the gateway.

Mademoiselle, marching along, arrived at another barred gate. Here were a captain and a company of guards, who presented arms in her honour. "I cried to the captain to open the gate. He made signs that he had not the keys; I said he could break it open, and that he owed obedience to me rather than to *messieurs de la ville*, since I was their master's daughter." This argument being useless, Mademoiselle proceeded to threats and strong language, to which low bows were the only reply.

She was more successful with the boatmen on the Loire, which she reached a little further on. A few compliments and presents inspired these men to do wonders in her service. They undertook to break open the Porte Brulée, in the wall of the quay, and set to work at once, the guard being contented to look on. Mademoiselle also looked on from her side, scrambling like a cat through thorns and briars to a point of view on the opposite bank. Her two young *maréchaux*, Madame de Fiesque and Madame de Frontenac, were enchanted to follow her anywhere, but most of her party were very nervous, and poor Madame de

Bréauté, "the most cowardly creature in the world," shrieked with terror through the whole business. "I believe her transports even made her swear. She diverted me much," said Mademoiselle.

The quay before the gate had to be reached by climbing from the water some distance below. The men made a bridge of boats for the Princess and her ladies. After crossing this they had to mount a long and crazy ladder with a broken rung. But the adventure was all the more amusing.

Within the gate, a merry crowd of Orléanais, people and soldiers, encouraged the blows of the boatmen. As soon as a way was made, by tearing out two planks from the heavy barred door, a servant lifted Mademoiselle across the muddy quay and pushed her head foremost through the hole—"me fourra par ce trou."

A quick rattle of drums greeted the "new Maid of Orléans" as she thus took the city by storm. Welcomed by the shouting people, she held out her hand to be kissed by the captain of the guard. Monsieur de Vilaine was a wise astrologer.

Mademoiselle's personal triumph was complete. She was lifted into a chair and carried shoulder-high through the streets, with drums beating, in the midst of a laughing crowd that thronged to kiss her hands, she too laughing heartily in her delight. Her suite were all left behind; she was absolutely alone among the citizens of whom her gay daring youth had made so easy a conquest. There were only a few minutes, however, of this glorious fun. Her perch was not exactly comfortable; she assured the men she knew how to walk and persuaded them to set her down. Then her ladies overtook her, muddy and excited; Madame de Fiesque, they say, had been kissing the boatmen; Madame de Frontenac had lost a shoe. Then she was met by the governor and the town councillors, more frightened than pleased. She took things with a high hand: sent for her escort, received addresses from the civic bodies, assumed without resistance, as her father's representative, the chief command in Orléans. It was evening before she had time to remember that she

was hungry, having lived on excitement since five o'clock in the morning.

She had stormed Orléans just in time. The very next morning the royal keeper of the seals arrived with a number of *gens de la cour* to demand entrance. Mademoiselle, surrounded by blue-scarfed officers and a devoted crowd, watched his discomfiture from a tower by the gate. "I let them know," she says, "that I was mistress in Orléans . . . there was no hope left for *les mazarins*." Later in the day, enthroned at the Hôtel de Ville, Mademoiselle lectured the authorities on their duty according to the Fronde. They listened respectfully enough.

But the cloud of glory had its dark side, and it was not long before the gay triumphant laughter changed to frowns and fits of anger. Even Monsieur's charming letter, in which he told his daughter that her action was worthy of the grandchild of Henry the Great—even Condé's friendly congratulations—did not make it an easy task to manage either the citizens of Orléans or the army of Nemours and Beaufort; and Mademoiselle had taken the command of both.

Orléans had a most reasonable terror of the army. Mademoiselle found about fifty soldiers, who had been caught robbing or murdering in the neighbourhood, shut up in prison, and it was only her frank offer to have them hanged in the public squares which induced the authorities to send them back to the army. Her discipline, she declares, restored peace and confidence in the villages in twenty-four hours. The poor peasants began to venture once more to their fields and to market, without the fear of having their cattle and horses and poultry stolen, or worse still, of being tortured in many horrid ways to extract money.

It is not strange that the Orléanais were bent on keeping the army at a distance. Mademoiselle readily concurred in this. But they had the same objection to the presence of any princes or generals. It was all very well to receive a lively young princess, but a fierce man of war was a different affair. When the Prince de Condé offered Mademoiselle a

visit, she had some difficulty in persuading the authorities to admit him, and quarrelled seriously with M. de Sourdis, the *mazarin* governor, on the subject. In the end, Condé went on straight to Paris after the combat of Bleneau, and with the Bishop's help Mademoiselle made up her quarrel. M. de Sourdis, a good-natured old man, was in the habit of sending her every day a packet of his special *confitures*, so that he was distinctly pleasanter as a friend than as an enemy. Mademoiselle had the face to ask, through the Bishop, for all the packets she had missed during the quarrel. M. de Sourdis courteously sent them. "So I gained a good deal by making up with him!"

It was easier to deal with the Orléans authorities, tiresome as they might be, than with the leaders of the army. Mademoiselle was furious with M. de Beaufort, who had gone beyond her orders, ignored M. de Nemours, and made an unsuccessful attack on Jargeau for the sake of the bridge over the Loire. The only consequence was the loss of some valuable lives, including that of an heroic old soldier, the Baron de Sirot, who was brought to Orléans to be nursed under Mademoiselle's care, but died of his wounds.

As it was necessary to decide on the further movements of the army, Mademoiselle met the generals and other officers at a house outside the walls. Here her presence was no check upon the violent tempers of Beaufort and Nemours. The latter "se mit à jurer et à pester," declaring that Beaufort was betraying Monsieur le Prince, on which Beaufort struck him, and swords were drawn. There was a horrible tumult, everybody rushing to separate them. At last both heroes gave up their swords to Mademoiselle. She took her cousin Beaufort into the garden and made him beg her pardon on his knees. M. de Nemours was not so easily pacified; it was after midnight before he would either apologise to Mademoiselle or be reconciled with his brother-in-law, and she left them unwillingly in the charge of their respective officers.

This quarrel, never really made up, was to end fatally four months later.

CHAPTER VI

1652

“ Nous qui sommes
De par Dieu
Gentilhommes
De haut lieu,
Il faut faire
Bruit sur terre
Et la guerre
N'est qu'un jeu.”

MADemoiselle QUEEN OF PARIS—THE SHRINE OF SAINTE-GENE-
VIÈVE—DUKE CHARLES OF LORRAINE—THE PORTE ST. ANTOINE—
THE CANNON OF THE BASTILLE—THE MASSACRE AT THE HÔTEL DE
VILLE—THE DUEL OF BEAUFORT AND NEMOURS—MADemoiselle EX-
PELLED FROM THE TUILERIES—THE END OF THE FRONDE

AFTER a few weeks of authority, Mademoiselle began to find Orléans insupportably dull. She had walked all over the town, had visited the churches and convents, had played at ninepins in her garden, had entertained the magistrates, had written hundreds of letters and signed a thousand passports, had gone out on riding expeditions, visiting the houses in the neighbourhood, had accepted fêtes from the Governor and the Bishop. April was ending; May, the loveliest Parisian month, drew her irresistibly back to Paris.

Her return was one long triumph. The army of the Fronde, now at Étampes, received her as commander-in-chief: she rode through the ranks with her two field-marschals, saluted by waving swords, by cannon, trumpets, and drums. She was honourably escorted, by order of Turenne, through the quarters of the royal army, now at Châtres, between the *Frondeurs* and Paris. Nearer still, at Bourg-la-Reine, she was met by the Prince de Condé himself, with a



THE PALACE OF THE TUILLERIES

FROM AN OLD PRINT

crowd of lords and ladies. His reception was most friendly; she invited him into her coach, and they talked all the way into Paris, the road and the streets lined with coaches and filled with enthusiastic people. The city loved Mademoiselle and admired Condé, though it dreaded and opposed the entry of his army within the walls.

The atmosphere of the Luxembourg was less agreeable than that of the streets. Monsieur had not wished his daughter to return so soon; her restless energy and her indiscretions bored him, and he was jealous of her popularity. Condé's violent politics also bored him; he feared, not without reason, what might happen when the two worked together. Monsieur had taken to his bed with a touch of fever; and though he received Mademoiselle with smiles, he would hear no talk of public business. He would hardly even listen to the news of Turenne's attack on Étampes, made immediately after Mademoiselle had passed through the quarters of the two armies.

A visit to Madame, made in company with Condé, was not successful. Madame showed little interest in her step-daughter's triumphal return. With great disgust she sniffed Condé's Russia-leather boots. She found the odour so unbearable that Monsieur le Prince had to retire into the ante-chamber while Mademoiselle paid her visit.

They consoled themselves by driving in the Cours, enjoying the acclamations of the crowds, which were so tremendous that they almost embarrassed Mademoiselle. But indeed she was satisfied, even enchanted. It was not only the Parisians in the streets with whom she was popular. All the society of the Fronde came thronging to the Tuileries; and from her return to Paris it was here, not at the Luxembourg, that the Princes held their court and met in council. "J'étois comme la reine de Paris," says Mademoiselle. "J'étois honorée au dernier point, et en grande considération." Condé, with many words, assured her that there was nothing he desired more than to see her Queen of France, and she herself believed that this ambition

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was about to be gratified. Peace must be made soon, and she was led to believe that her marriage with Louis XIV would be the chief condition.

Afterwards, she knew very well that the air was even then thick with intrigue, and that not only Monsieur, but her new friend Condé, withheld full confidence from her. Mademoiselle, all honour to her, was never a good conspirator. Her speech was always too open; her decisions were too honest and quick; she was never capable of working underground, either in her own interest or that of any one else. She was never a match, for instance, for Madame de Châtillon, who about this time was trying to draw the Court and the Princes together without any question of her or her claims. It is satisfactory to know that this mean intrigue came to nothing.

Mademoiselle, in her innocent confidence and frank self-satisfaction, really seems to stand out as the one honest person in the last scenes, confused and struggling, of the Fronde. If in one sense she was the centre of the party, in another she was curiously alone. Her ladies, the women of whom she was fondest, were as selfish and frivolous as the rest of the world. There was not a good or a sensible man in her family. She had one absolutely faithful friend—her secretary Préfontaine; and she had always the fine company of her own high birth and splendid position, which no one respected more than herself.

The misery in Paris and its environs was very great at this time. The civil war was not yet actually in the streets, but outside the walls the green country was blackened and devoured by armies whose means of living were robbery and violence. The miserable peasants crowded into Paris; homeless and starving, they lay down and died in the streets. Private charity, guided by Father Vincent, did much; but what the people needed was peace; and the mob had now two cries: *La paix, la paix!* and *Point de Mazarin!* Often rival groups came to blows, shouting these rival cries, and the streets were dangerous for every one not known to favour Condé.

Madame de Motteville tells us of ladies of quality, driving across the Pont Neuf, who were dragged from their coach and thrown into the Seine. She also describes a scene which struck every one as unreal and curious, even at that time. The people had insisted that the shrine of Sainte Geneviève should be carried in procession through the streets "pour chasser le Mazarin et avoir la paix." Condé and Beaufort, not satisfied to watch the procession, with Monsieur and the rest of their world, from the windows, went down into the streets among the crowd. There they courted popularity by behaving not only like pious women, but like crazy devotees. Condé, on his knees in the street, sprang up and flung himself in among the priests who were guarding the silver-gilt, jewelled shrine. After kissing it a hundred times with every mark of passionate devotion, Beaufort following his example, he withdrew amidst shouts of applause. "Ah! le bon prince! et qu'il est dévot!"

Matters were not improved by the arrival of Madame's brother, Duke Charles of Lorraine, with an army of mercenaries.

He came on the pretext of helping the Princes, but it was fairly well known, even then, that he had been negotiating with Mazarin; also that Monsieur welcomed him as a counterpoise to Condé, whose furious extremes were alienating the Parliament and all moderate men by making peace wellnigh impossible. Madame de Chevreuse, gained over by Mazarin, and estranged from the Condé faction by the breaking off of the Prince de Conti's engagement with her daughter, was the leading spirit of this intrigue. It was a clever one, for it added the last straw to the misery of France, and pushed the Fronde nearer to its end. The army of Lorraine was the worst of all that had devastated the wretched country near Paris, and when the Duke retired—after having agreed with Turenne to raise the siege of Étampes, where the main army of the Fronde was held in check—the wrath of Paris was such that no one, for fear of being thrown into the river, dared call himself *Lorrain*.

For the mob at this time, as for Mademoiselle, Condé could do no wrong. The *bas peuple* of Paris was anti-royalist, as well as anti-Mazarin, and the English royalties at the Louvre came in for a share of its hatred. The young Duke of York was a volunteer in Turenne's army; Charles II had the credit of meddling between the Court and the Duc de Lorraine. Mademoiselle reports the fierce talk of the people, which made it prudent for her aunt and cousin to remain very quiet at the Louvre. She was herself angry with them, and told them plainly that they ought to hold themselves neutral in the present quarrel, though she acknowledged, at the same time, that they owed a good deal to the Court. Her coldness to Charles after her triumphant return made Queen Henrietta say that not only, like the famous Maid, had she saved Orléans, but that, like her, she was hunting out the English. Everybody found it a duty to repeat the sharp saying to Mademoiselle, who was not pleased with it.

Always easily attracted and amused, she took a certain fancy to Charles de Lorraine, who had all the eccentric individuality of a generation now passing away. He made himself very agreeable to her. He stuffed her ears with flattery; he was always bareheaded in her presence; when she left the Luxembourg, where he was staying with Monsieur and Madame, he handed her to her coach and then walked beside it for some distance, his hand on the door. He visited her at the Tuileries, drove with her in the Cours, entertained her and her ladies with extraordinary and dreadful stories of his campaigns—how his soldiers ate not only horses, but men, and boiled down old women into soup!

The Duke's object was to avoid all serious conference with Monsieur and with Condé until the Étampes affair was finally settled with Turenne. If there was any question of committing himself by a direct answer, he began to sing and to dance, so that nobody could help laughing. When Monsieur invited him into his cabinet to discuss affairs with Cardinal de Retz, he said, "Give me a string

of beads: priests should pray, and teach people to pray; they have no business to meddle with other things." At this point arrived two of his special allies; Madame de Chevreuse and Madame de Montbazon. He seized a guitar. "Dance, ladies, dance!" and "affairs" were banished.

When the royal army had retired from Étampes, the army of the Princes advanced to Saint-Cloud. There it spent some June days agreeably enough, the officers amusing themselves in Paris, while various communications tending towards peace, in which Condé took little or no part, were carried on with the Court. Meanwhile the war-game dragged on. The Maréchal de la Ferté threw a bridge over the Seine and the royal troops began to cross it on July 1st, with the intention of attacking Saint-Cloud. Condé decided at once to move his army round Paris to Charenton.

On that same evening of the 1st of July Mademoiselle was walking in the garden of the Tuileries. Arriving at the Porte de la Conférence, which opened on the fashionable drive outside the walls, the Cours-de-la-Reine, she was told by the guard that troops were passing. This was not news to turn Mademoiselle back; she went out into the Cours and found herself in the presence of Condé's vanguard and baggage train, slowly making its way round the walls in the charge of an anxious officer. From the terrace of the Jardin de Renard, close by, where she met Madame de Châtillon and other society people, Mademoiselle watched for some time the passage of the army. After speaking her mind with her usual plainness, and abusing all negotiators, she went home to the Tuileries.

All that night the army was passing by, and Mademoiselle, listening at her open window till two in the morning, heard not only the trumpets and drums, but the tramp of the marching men. She was sad at heart, full of fears for the army, and yet with an instinctive feeling that in some unforeseen way she might once more be of use.

At six o'clock her presentiments were justified by the arrival of the Comte de Fiesque, bearing a message from

Monsieur le Prince. He was in difficulties : the royal troops had attacked him at dawn ; Paris was closed to him ; he had sent to Monsieur, entreating him to mount his horse and come to his aid, but Monsieur had replied that he was ill. Condé now sent to Mademoiselle, begging her not to forsake him.

He appealed to the right person. Mademoiselle sprang from her bed and flew to the Luxembourg, where she found Monsieur pacing restlessly at the top of the stairs, and the palace full of laughing people, friends of Cardinal de Retz, who cared nothing whether Condé lived or died. In the midst of them the Duchesse de Nemours was sobbing with anxiety for her husband and her brother.

Mademoiselle stormed at her irresolute father. With angry tears and reproaches she begged him either to mount his horse or to go to bed. She accused him of having a treaty in his pocket, of being ready to sacrifice the Prince to Cardinal Mazarin. It would have been nothing new for Gaston d'Orléans.

After an hour wasted in furious argument, during which, as Mademoiselle bitterly reflected, the Prince and all his friends and her own might be dying in battle, Monsieur at last consented to send her to the Hôtel de Ville, to see what the city authorities could or would do.

As she drove through the streets, accompanied by the Duc de Rohan, the Duchesse de Nemours, and the two Comtesses de Fiesque, crowds pressed upon the coach and cried to her for orders.

"What shall we do? You have only to command ; we are ready to obey you!"

"Messieurs de la Ville" were not quite so ready. The Maréchal de l'Hôpital, Governor of Paris, M. Antoine Lefèvre, Provost of the Merchants, and the city councillors and sheriffs, were solid men, not carried away by enthusiasm, even for the hero of Rocroy. They thought more of preserving Paris than of helping Condé. They were willing to grant Monsieur's requests so far as to send two thousand

men to the Prince's rescue and to station four hundred in the Place Royale. But as for allowing him and his army to save themselves by entering the city, that was quite another affair. They looked at each other.

When Mademoiselle threatened them with the vengeance of Mazarin and the royal troops, they replied that if the army of the Fronde had kept away from Paris, the royal army would have done the same. Mademoiselle had not come there to argue such points as this. With a passionate gesture, her cause visibly strengthened by the mob that were howling for Condé in the Place de Grève, she cried, "Think, gentlemen! While you are disputing, Monsieur le Prince is in peril in your faubourgs. Think what eternal grief and shame for Paris, should he perish there for want of help! You can help him; so do it quickly!"

The authorities withdrew to consider. In the few minutes' pause that followed, a solemn sound of singing rose to Mademoiselle's ears through a window that opened into the Foundling Hospital of the Saint-Esprit, built against the north side of the Hôtel de Ville. She knelt down by the window to hear the Mass and to pray; but not so devoutly that she did not spring to her feet more than once and impatiently demand an answer from the too deliberate men. There is even a story that she threatened to tear the Governor's beard if he hesitated much longer.

At length she had her way; they consented that Monsieur le Prince and his army should take refuge within the walls. She despatched messengers with the good news, then got into her coach again and drove with all speed towards the Porte St. Antoine. She hardly yet knew whether she had saved Condé.

Her doubts were justified. The royal troops far outnumbered his—12,000 men against 5000—and it had been hard work to fight his way through the Faubourgs St. Denis and St. Martin to the Faubourg St. Antoine. The Court, by the way, was at St. Denis, and the Queen spent all that day on her knees before the altar in the Carmelite church there.

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It was a desperate losing conflict outside the gate of St. Antoine. Condé was "like a demon," everywhere at once; he had never shown himself a greater commander. His troops were not worthy of him; but his officers, his friends, followed him like paladins of an older time, and died by scores with a heroism worthy of a nobler cause. The army of Turenne and La Ferté also lost some of its finest officers; and amongst those who fell was young Paul Mancini, the Cardinal's nephew. But sheer force of numbers and circumstances would have crushed Condé in the end, if he had been much longer pent up between Turenne and the closed gates of the city. For some hours of that blazing July day, only the wounded and the dead were allowed to enter Paris.

As Mademoiselle drove from the Hôtel de Ville, she encountered frightful sights in the streets. One after another, the victims of the terrible fight passed by. The Duc de la Rochefoucauld, led by a friend and his young son, his white coat dripping with blood from a shocking wound in the face which had blinded him for the time; young Guitaut, shot through the body, bare-headed, pale as death; and many more whom she knew, some able to speak in answer to her eager words, some passing on silently; and then, borne on barrows, ladders, planks, those who would never speak or fight again.

But she had saved Condé. He came from the midst of the fight and rested a few minutes at the house where she was, close to the Bastille and the Porte St. Antoine.

"He was in a pitiable state," she says; "he had two inches of dust on his face, his hair was all matted; his shirt and collar were soaked with blood, though he was not wounded; his cuirass was dented all over, and he carried his sword in his hand, having lost the scabbard; he gave it to my equerry. He said to me, 'You behold a man in despair; I have lost all my friends.' . . ." He counted over their names, while Mademoiselle tried to comfort him. He wept bitter tears, and begged her to excuse his grief. "And they say he cares for

no one!" she cries, remembering that tragic scene, during which, perhaps, she touched the proudest moment of her life.

But her work was not quite done. Condé returned to the battle, leaving the command of the gate and the care of the wounded in her hands. He did not mean his entry into Paris to be a disgraceful rout; he would fight his way. The world should never reproach him with having fled "*en plein midi devant les mazarins.*"

The ramparts of Paris were lined with *bourgeois* watching the fight, also visible to Louis XIV and Cardinal Mazarin from the heights of Charonne. There was a good deal of indifference among the citizens; unlike the mob in the street, they were sick of the Fronde and its disorders, and that crowd on the walls held many to whom Condé's defeat, even his death, would not have been unwelcome. And even after the gates of Paris were open to him, his army was in great danger. The fighting went on all through the hot afternoon. The wounded and the stragglers kept dropping in through the gate, begging for water. Mademoiselle was joined by Monsieur, by Madame de Châtillon, and by others of her half-hearted party, whose congratulations did not ring true.

For a better view of the battle and its chances, Mademoiselle mounted to the towers of the Bastille. A telescope showed her the royal coaches on the distant hill; it also showed her certain movements of Turenne's cavalry, which was preparing to cut off the Prince's retreat into the city. Then Mademoiselle gave the order which, according to Cardinal Mazarin, "killed her husband." The cannon of the Bastille spoke, thundering against the royal horsemen as they galloped towards the gate and sweeping down their foremost ranks. Thus finally saved, the army of the Fronde marched into Paris.

"Vous êtes notre libératrice!" the men cried as they passed under the window where Mademoiselle was standing.

Long afterwards she confessed that she looked back on

that day with a troubled joy. At the time delight was only equalled by astonishment at her own brilliant deeds, though the thoughts which kept her awake all that night were not so much of her personal glory and Condé's gratitude as of "all the poor dead," among whom was her special friend in the Orléans expedition, the Marquis de Flamarens.

The riot at the Hôtel de Ville, two days later, was described by Mademoiselle as the *coup de massue* of the party of the Fronde. Once more the cowardly Gaston sent his daughter to take his place at a dangerous moment.

A grand meeting of the Municipality, with deputies from the Parliament, was held at the Hôtel de Ville. The Princes were present in force, though even then Monsieur held back and was two hours late. They meant the Assembly to place the destinies of Paris and of France formally in their hands. The shivering Gaston was to be lieutenant-general of the kingdom; Condé, generalissimo of the forces. The announced object was to rescue Louis XIV from the hands of Cardinal Mazarin.

All through the streets, and mingled with the crowds in the Place de Grève, were Condé's soldiers. Blue ribbons and bunches of straw, the colour and badge of the party, were worn by every one who did not wish to be attacked and beaten by the *canaille* as a *mazarin*.

Mademoiselle went out driving in the afternoon with a bunch of straw tied to her fan. The heat was stifling; storms indeed were in the air. Returning to the Luxembourg, she met the Princes in a bad temper; the Assembly had gone against them; instead of trusting them with sovereign power, its chief idea was to reconcile Paris with the King. Peace, not war, was the desire of Parliament and Municipality alike.

Monsieur, exhausted by the heat, was changing his clothes, when a breathless messenger, almost speechless from haste and terror, rushed into the palace. He brought with him a few words hastily scribbled by Goulas, Monsieur's secretary, who had stayed behind at the Hôtel de Ville. The

people were breaking in; Monsieur was implored to stop these horrors and to save the Assembly. He "tapped his teeth with his nails," says Conrart, and saw nothing he could do. He asked Condé to go. The Prince answered with a sneer that as for himself, he was a coward, and had no experience of dealing with sedition. It was Condé's own fault if contemporaries believed that the massacre had been incited, if not ordered by him.

Finally, they sent the Duc de Beaufort, whose popularity with the mob was still very great; and shortly afterwards, no further news arriving, Mademoiselle herself was allowed to go. "L'appétit vient en mangeant," and the Princess, no doubt, was quite as much bent on another exciting adventure as on saving the Maréchal de l'Hôpital and M. Lefèvre.

She drove out of the Luxembourg with a large suite of officers and ladies, including poor old Madame de Fiesque in great fear. Even in the nearer streets they came upon dead *mazarins*, struck down for want of a straw, and at the Pont Notre Dame they met a councillor from the Hôtel de Ville being carried home dead. His bearers declared that the mob had even fired on the Blessed Sacrament, brought out by the clergy as a means of stilling the tumult.

Mademoiselle sent messengers to the Hôtel de Ville, but they never came back. Driving in the dark and narrow streets, her coach wheels got entangled with those of a dead-cart which travelled every night from hospital to cemetery. It was not easy to escape contact with ghastly protruding feet and hands. She listened to the entreaties of her escort and returned to the Luxembourg.

At midnight her father's restless anxiety, not to mention her own, sent her out again with a smaller party. Madame de Fiesque had wisely gone to bed. The streets were now quiet, the night was calm and beautiful; she reached the Place de Grève without difficulty, even amused by the half-dressed people who chattered to her by the way. There was only one alarming incident. An armed man looked in suddenly at her window and asked, "Is the Prince here?"

She answered, "No," and he disappeared. When too late to stop him, she concluded that he had meant to kill the Prince.

The Duc de Beaufort had quieted the fury of the mob, but many *mazarins*, deputies, citizens, clergy, had been massacred, and the Hôtel de Ville was much injured by fire. Mademoiselle stepped over charred and smoking beams, through gaping doorways, into empty halls with burnt shutters and window-frames open to the night. The place was not yet too safe; one of the halls was still burning; stray shots terrified her ladies. But she remained there with Beaufort for several hours, till the day had dawned and she had ascertained that the remaining city magistrates were in safety. Then she went out confidently into the still crowded Place de Grève.

"God bless you!" the people cried. "All that you do is well done." So Her Royal Highness went home to the Tuileries with a good conscience, and slept soundly all through the next day.

From that fatal 4th of July, public opinion in Paris began to turn against Condé, and the downfall of the Fronde was now only a matter of weeks. Mademoiselle, seeing little except outward triumph, did not realise this at the time, but pranced joyously through the rest of the summer, playing at soldiers with Condé, who called a regiment by her name. His officers almost fought for the honour of commanding companies under Mademoiselle.

All was not pure amusement, however. Some dispute about precedence caused a new quarrel between the Ducs de Beaufort and de Nemours. Their friends, Mademoiselle among them, did their best to prevent a duel, but Nemours was implacable, though at the very last moment Beaufort said to him, "Ah, mon frère, quelle honte! Forget the past; let us be friends." "Ah, coquin!" cried Nemours. "You shall kill me, or I shall kill you!" He then attacked Beaufort so furiously that he had to fire his pistol in self-defence, killing Nemours on the spot. The eight seconds rushed into the fray; two of them died of their wounds.

This duel made an immense sensation in society. It was fought in the horse-market behind the Hôtel de Vendôme, and among the first persons on the spot was Madame de Rambouillet's daughter, the Abbess of Yères, who knelt to pray beside the dead man. She tried to prove that there was a moment for repentance before the Duke's spirit passed, but the surgeons could not admit it, and some difficulty was made about giving him Christian burial. Even the easy-going Archbishop of Paris would not allow the pompous funeral services his friends wished for. This greatly embittered the grief of Madame de Nemours, whose true affection for both husband and brother had long made her life anxious and miserable.

Another funeral, which ought to have been royal, was shorn of its splendour in these August days. Louis XIV coldly refused to allow the little Duc de Valois, Monsieur's only son, to be buried with his ancestors at Saint-Denis. The royal letter pointed out that His Majesty's uncle should regard the child's death as a direct punishment from God for the unjust war he had been waging against His Majesty.

The reproach may have been just, says Mademoiselle, but it was not the time to make it. She hurried to the Luxembourg on hearing that her little brother was dead. She found "*Monsieur fort pénétré de douleur, et Madame qui mangeoit un potage.*" She went to see the dead child in his cradle, "*beau comme un petit ange.*" All round the priests were praying, or rather praising God. Mademoiselle broke down and sobbed so bitterly that her people had to lead her away; yet she saw that the boy was happy in his early death. He was backward, delicate, and deformed; at two years old he could neither speak nor walk.

All this time negotiations for peace were going on, both openly and secretly. Paris, not to mention the nation at large, was sick and tired of the war. The Princes tried separately to make favourable terms for themselves; the great ladies and their intrigues were now mostly on the

Court side, always excepting Madame de Longueville and the Princesse de Condé, who held out long at Bordeaux.

The Parliament sent deputations; Cardinal de Retz, at the head of a long line of coaches conveying the canons of Notre Dame and the curés of Paris, visited the King at Compiègne and begged him to return to his city. The wise Mazarin made everything easier by taking himself away on a journey to the frontier. The King published an amnesty for all who would return to their obedience at once and unconditionally.

It seems that the Prince de Condé and Mademoiselle were the only two, among the great *frondeurs* and *frondeuses*, not ready to submit. He held out for impossible terms; she, proud and single-hearted, was loyal to him and a dying cause; the old cause, the long and now ending struggle of the nobles of France against absolute monarchy. Her last hopes of winning a crown by force of arms must have been dead by this time. And yet she hardly realised what serious, almost unpardonable offence she had given at Court.

The Duc de Lorraine had again appeared in Paris, this time as Condé's uncompromising ally. But when October was beginning, the Court at Saint-Germain, the atmosphere of Paris more royalist every day, they determined that it was time to lead their troops away to the frontier, where they might carry on the war at greater advantage. They took a merry farewell of Mademoiselle at the Tuileries, assuring her that Monsieur had promised to make the King's entry as difficult as possible. For themselves, they would do great things in the fine weather that remained, and then, their troops in winter quarters, they would come back "aux bals et aux comédies."

Mademoiselle was not ashamed to shed tears when her heroes were gone and she was left alone in Paris with her disagreeable father. She lingered long on the thought of her "grande allée" of the Tuileries, full of splendid men in new winter garments, the long-cloaked mourning for her brother being ended. Gold, flame-colour, silver and black, with the

blue scarf of the Fronde over all; Monsieur le Prince had never looked so well. And now he was gone; they were all gone; the autumn leaves were beginning to fall. Nothing was left but ennui and a rising fear of being *chassée*!

A few days later, early in the morning, she received an order from the King to leave the Tuileries. He was to enter Paris the next day, and had no lodging but this to offer Monsieur his brother. Mademoiselle must therefore be gone by noon. She hurried to consult her father. He said, "You must obey." She then set herself to find a new home in Paris, a difficult matter, with the idea of remaining where she might still be of some use to her friend Condé. It did not at first occur to her that the Luxembourg was her natural refuge.

On Sunday she dined as usual in state, her musicians playing, though her heart was heavy enough at leaving the pleasant palace, her home of twenty-five years. Later she watched the King's entry from Madame de Choisy's windows on the Place du Louvre. A man passed by, selling paper lanterns for the illuminations of the evening. "Lanternes à la royale!" was his cry. The daring Princess leaned from the window. "Have you none *à la Fronde*?" Madame de Choisy exclaimed, "For God's sake! Do you want me to be murdered?" It was a lesson for Mademoiselle, so long the adored of that capricious city.

A report that Monsieur had been ordered out of Paris took her again to the Luxembourg. Here the father and daughter had a stormy scene. She accused him, not for the first time, of making a separate peace with the Court and forsaking Condé. He told her to mind her own affairs. She asked what was to become of her. He answered that he neither knew nor cared; she had never taken his advice, and had done everything possible to set the Court against her. "But the fame of having acted the heroine, and saved our party twice over, will give you plenty of consolation whatever happens!"

Mademoiselle defended herself with spirit from these and

more sarcastic reproaches. To be accused of acting the heroine was unbearable.

"I don't know what it is to be a heroine. My birth compels me to behave always in a high and great manner; you can call that what you please. Myself, I call it following my own inclination and taking my own way; I was born to take no other."

She then asked him to allow her to lodge at the Luxembourg, as more fitting for her than the neighbourhood of the Louvre. He refused. Might she then go to the empty Hotel de Condé? No.

"Where do you wish me to go then, Monsieur?"

"Wherever you please."

The next day Monsieur himself left Paris for Blois at the King's command, and Mademoiselle, alone with her ladies, in sudden terror of arrest and imprisonment, fled secretly away into the depths of the country.

So ended "that tragi-comedy called the Fronde"; and with it the heroic age of Mademoiselle de Montpensier.

PART III

EXILE AND LATER LIFE

1652-1693

CHAPTER I

1652-1657

" . . . Dessus ses tours
Sont nichés les vautours,
Les oiseaux de malheur.

Hélas, ma bonne, hélas ! que j'ai grand peur ! "

THE JACOBIN FRIAR—THE CHÂTEAU DE SAINT-FARGEAU—MADEMOISELLE'S COURT IN EXILE—THE MARQUISE DE THIANGES—FAMILY QUARRELS—THE DUC DE NEUBOURG

FLYING from an imaginary pursuit, Mademoiselle stopped to change horses at a village inn between Paris and Pont-sur-Yonne.

A friar in a white habit was sitting at the kitchen table. He had thrown off his black Dominican cloak, and was enjoying an hour's rest and refreshment, when his peace was disturbed by the sudden entrance of a tall masked woman in travelling dress, who asked abruptly to what order he belonged and where he came from. The friar at first resented her curiosity, but something pleasant yet authoritative in the stranger's tone conquered him. He told her that he was a Jacobin, of the convent in the Rue St. Honoré, on his way back from Nancy. She began by being equally frank. She told him she came from Paris, and asked questions about the Duc de Lorraine and his popularity in his own country. He then inquired whether it was true that the King was to return to Paris.

" Yes, indeed," said she. " He arrived there two days ago, and Monsieur le Duc d'Orléans and Mademoiselle have left."

" I'm sorry to hear it," the friar said. " Monsieur is a good fellow. As for Mademoiselle, she is a brave lass. She

would think no more of carrying a pike than of wearing a mask. She has plenty of courage. Do you know her?"

This sounded risky, and the traveller said, "No."

"What!" exclaimed the friar. "And you don't know that she jumped over the wall at Orléans, and that she saved the Prince's life at the Porte St. Antoine?"

The lady had heard something of this, but she declared that she had never seen Mademoiselle. The friar described her to the life.

"A tall, handsome girl, as tall as you, with a long face and a large nose. If you will take off your mask, I'll tell you whether you are like her in face as well as in figure."

The lady excused herself; she had lately had the small-pox. She went on asking questions. The friar declared that he had seen and spoken to Mademoiselle thousands of times, both at the Tuileries and at his convent church, which she used to attend with the Queen. They chattered about the Court, and about Madame and her lazy ways; she was indeed a contrast to the lively Mademoiselle.

"But who are you, madame, who ask me so many questions?"

The friar was gravely told that he was speaking to the widow of a gentleman of Sologne, who had gone through many troubles in the war and was now on her way to her brother in Champagne.

"Well, if you are ever in Paris, come and see us at our convent."

"I am of the Religion," was the cool reply.

The good friar immediately set to work to convert this stray sheep. But she told him the matter was too serious to be treated *en passant*. Controversy must wait, she said, till she visited Paris in the winter.

They parted good friends. The friar had a word of kindly sympathy on the fatigues of his journey. History does not say whether he ever discovered who the masked Protestant widow really was. As to Mademoiselle, she forgot his name, but had a vivid memory of the adventure, and wrote it down

in detail. It amused her extremely, and cheered her on her fugitive way.

She spent a few anxious days hidden incognito at the Château de Pont, with her loyal old friend Madame Bouthillier. The Court took no notice of her. Mazarin was too wise to insist on any punishment beyond distance and coldness, hard enough for the first Princess of the blood royal. Condé and Lorraine found means to reach her with affectionate letters. Duke Charles wished her to retire to a château on the frontier where he could frequently visit her; the Prince offered her his life and his army, and advised her to fortify herself at Honfleur with M. de Longueville and the nobles of Normandy, promising to send succours from Ostend. He added that in case of extremity she could escape by sea.

But Mademoiselle was not quite so mad as these heroes thought. She excused herself from the Honfleur plan by her horror of the sea; but really she did not wish to remain in a state of open war with Louis XIV. Her father, safe at Blois, sent definite commands that she should retire to one of her own estates. She decided on Saint-Fargeau, an old Montpensier château in the valley of the Loing. It was three days' journey from Paris, the same from Blois, and four days from Stenay, where Condé was likely to spend the winter. When the news of her decision reached the King, he wrote stiffly but kindly to announce his approval and to assure his cousin of safety and liberty. In thanking His Majesty, Mademoiselle dwelt upon her happy possession of a clear conscience. Her devotion to his service left her nothing to fear, she said. She was incapable of doing anything unworthy of a loyal Frenchwoman and of the position to which God had called her.

This serenity of mind did not make the journey to Saint-Fargeau less uncomfortable and alarming. The country was full of roving bands of armed men, who were supposed to be collecting taxes. Some of them had already shown their true character by attacking one of Mademoiselle's coaches

as it followed her from Paris, and stealing horses, money, and M. de Préfontaine's clothes. Luckily they left behind what Mademoiselle valued more, her boxes of papers, containing a manuscript of her own, *La Vie de Madame de Fouquerolles*, and Madame de Frontenac's *Royaume de la Lune*. On this occasion and many more, his mistress's lack of a sense of proportion made Préfontaine angry.

"We arrived at Saint-Fargeau at two o'clock in the morning," writes Mademoiselle, "and had to dismount outside, the bridge being broken. I entered an old house without doors or windows, grass knee-deep in the courtyard; I was horrified. They led me into a miserable room, supported by a beam in the middle. My terror and vexation were so great that I began to cry."

The Château de Saint-Fargeau lacked other things besides security. It had no furniture. Mademoiselle's baggage train, sent off without haste from Paris by old Madame de Fiesque, did not arrive for some days, and in the meanwhile she and her ladies had no beds to sleep in. Weary with her journey, she mounted her horse and rode five miles across country to the moated house of Dannery, inhabited by one Davaux, a steward of her estate. Here she stayed several days, and here one night she had a curious little experience.

Madame de Frontenac was sleeping in the same room, in a bed close by. Mademoiselle woke with a start to hear the curtains of this bed drawn sharply backwards and forwards.

"Are you dreaming," she called out, "to open your curtains at this time?"

"It was the wind," said Madame de Frontenac.

But there was no wind. Again came the sharp rattle of the curtain. In the dim light of the room, Madame de Frontenac herself saw it move, and very gladly, at Mademoiselle's call, she crept across to share her bed. When daylight came and they found courage to talk, no explanation seemed possible. A few days later Mademoiselle heard that a young soldier in her company, who was her foster-

brother, had been killed on the frontier at that very time. She then felt sure he had come to bid her farewell, and had masses said for the repose of his soul.

Ruins and ghosts in the solitude of a remote country, wild forest-land up to her very walls, profound stillness, only broken by voices and church bells from the neighbouring village, or by the autumn wind sighing, frogs croaking, owls hooting and squeaking, wolves beginning to howl in the long nights as winter hunger seized them—the scene and atmosphere of Mademoiselle's exile were not encouraging. There could not have been a greater change from the fighting adventures of the last few years, or from the gay splendour of the Tuileries. So much the more credit to Her Royal Highness for the spirited way in which, after the first few days, she began to make the best of things.

Finding that she was not likely to be attacked or disturbed in her solitude, she set to work to improve the old moated castle, her home for the next five years. Part of it dated from the earliest French kings; it had been built in its present form by the famous Jacques Cœur in the fifteenth century. After his fall it was bought by Antoine de Chabannes, Grand Master of France, from whom Mademoiselle was descended through her great-grandmother, Renée, Duchesse de Montpensier. Since the last Duke's death it had been deserted, except when Monsieur, as guardian of his daughter's estates, had allowed the old Duc de Bellegarde to live there during his years of exile under Cardinal de Richelieu.

The ponderous mediæval towers of Saint-Fargeau, with their quaint pepper-box turrets, were built of dark red brick and stone. A modern traveller describes them as "rosy in sunshine, purplish in shadow, tapestried with moss and ivy." Mademoiselle's actual rebuilding and restoration has left more traces, it seems, in the seventeenth-century architecture of the inner courtyard, with its stately high windows and archways and broad flights of steps. Her Parisian architect Le Vau, with his army of builders, was at work

there for years. She spent two hundred thousand francs on Saint-Fargeau.

The wild surroundings of the house, all long grass, brush-wood, and briars, very soon gave way to civilisation. By dint of cutting down, rooting up, and levelling, Mademoiselle made an alley and a long terrace—"with a very fine effect. For from this terrace," she writes, "one can see castle and village, woods, vineyards, a meadow with a river, which in summer is a lake. Not an unpleasant landscape."

The château was hardly comfortable while all these works were going on. For many months Mademoiselle lived in a garret, and her household and visitors lived where they could. But the mistress of the house set the tune of life there, and it was a gay tune of energy, high spirit, scorn of small discomforts, love of sports and games, with a real interest too in the ideas and the literary fashions of the day. There was no languor and no boredom at Saint-Fargeau.

Mademoiselle occupied herself from morning till night. She overlooked her workmen, she stitched away at her tapestry while romances were read to her, she wrote to the Prince de Condé by every mail, she kept an account of her weekly expenses, she finished the manuscripts she had brought with her and began more, as well as writing a large part of her famous Memoirs. She gave much thought and time to arranging a picture gallery with portraits of all her relations—Bourbon, Stuart, Montpensier, Guise—among whom her grandfather M. de Montpensier took the chief place as "master of the house."

When the winter roads were too muddy for driving, Mademoiselle went out riding; when they were a sheet of ice, she went out walking. Her greyhounds, "La Reine" and "Madame Souris," were always with her. She sent for a pack of hounds from England. "I took to hunting three times a week, which amused me much. The country about Saint-Fargeau is very good for hunting, and suits English dogs, who generally go too fast for women. This country being woody, I was able to follow them everywhere."

She very soon arranged a theatre in her great hall, and hired a travelling troupe of actors. The indispensable *comédie* had never seemed more delightful, though the audience sat shivering, cloaked and capped with furs. When Lent brought this diversion to an end, they played battle-dore and shuttlecock for four hours every day. Mademoiselle loved violent exercise. Dancing too was a necessity, and she sent for her band of violins.

In summer, like a princess of romance, she led her little Court through the woods; they dined on green grass by the river's bank with music playing, and discussed literature, the passion of love, human nature, and metaphysics. With eager arguments they enjoyed the books of the moment, the novels of Mademoiselle de Scudéry or M. de la Calprenède, where they saw their own society mirrored in "Greek, Persian, or Indian" disguises.

On the whole—to quote Madame Arvède Barine with her untranslatable charm—"il n'y eut pas de cour plus leste et plus fringante, plus allante et plus caracolante." And Mademoiselle's string of courtly visitors, during these years of disgrace, is a witness both to her real popularity and to the respect felt for her personal character. Saint-Fargeau was not easy to reach, and the party of the Fronde lay at Mazarin's mercy. The Parliament had been effectually silenced, Retz was in prison, Condé was fighting his last losing battles; Louis XIV, a handsome boy with a whip, was teaching the nobles that the one authority in France was his own. He was crowned at Reims in June, 1654, and though Mademoiselle pretends to care nothing about it, she was certainly sorry not to be in her right place on that occasion. The King's triumph over society was not yet complete, however, and it persisted in paying court to his rebellious cousin in her exile.

Among Mademoiselle's visitors at Saint-Fargeau were the Ducs de Beaufort and de Candale—brother of Mademoiselle d'Épernon—the Duchesse de Sully, the Comte and Comtesse de Béthune—those faithful friends whom she had visited as

a child in Touraine—the Marquises de Montglat, de Lavardin, and de Sévigné. The last was of Mademoiselle's own age, a charming young widow with a crowd of lovers, yet of whom scandal could find nothing to say; agreeable, coquettish, *piquante*, good-hearted, and natural; a fascinating talker in these days, long before her inimitable correspondence began.

The Comtesse de Maure, with all her oddities, was always a welcome guest. She brought with her a clever and attractive little niece, Mademoiselle de Vandy, of an ancient family in Lorraine. Mademoiselle took an immense fancy to this girl, who paid her several long visits. With the Mesdemoiselles d'Haucourt, who were brought to Saint-Fargeau by the Duchesse de Ventadour, and of whom Mademoiselle also declares herself "entêtée," Mademoiselle de Vandy was mixed up in some of the domestic worries caused by the frivolous jealousies and discontents of Madame de Frontenac and Madame de Fiesque the younger—Gillonne d'Harcourt, called Amaryllis in the *portraits* of the time. The two disloyal *maréchaes de camp*, who after the death of the elder Madame de Fiesque in 1653 gave their royal mistress more trouble and vexation than their service appears to have been worth, did their best to spoil the "douce vie" of Saint-Fargeau by making mischief between Mademoiselle and her guests. They led the Mesdemoiselles d'Haucourt so far astray as to teach them to laugh at their hostess. She declares that if she asked them what they were laughing at, they laughed the more. "Not a very respectful proceeding," says Mademoiselle; but her good-nature soon forgave the foolish girls. Mademoiselle de Vandy, a discreet little person, was not so easily corrupted.

"The Comtesses seem to think," said Madame de Maure, "that Mademoiselle de Vandy came from Paris on purpose to say rude things to Henry the Fourth's granddaughter in her own house!"

Mademoiselle de Vandy was called prudish by the livelier characters of her own day, and the life of intelligent laziness which suited her, with a certain air of superiority, would not

have seemed likely to recommend her to Mademoiselle. But the Princess was quite clever enough to appreciate real distinction, and to know that Mademoiselle de Vandy was right, though her little airs might be amusing, in standing rather aloof from the wilder society of Saint-Fargeau. Mademoiselle de Vandy became Mademoiselle's confidential friend and lady-in-waiting, and will be remembered as the heroine of her gay little sketch, *La Princesse de Paplagonie*. According to Mademoiselle, she was first thus named by Mademoiselle de Scudéry, who met her constantly in the literary circle of Madame de Maure.

Another and a very different person who visited Mademoiselle at Saint-Fargeau was Gabrielle de Rochechouart-Mortemart, eldest sister of the young beauty who was afterwards Marquise de Montespan, and lately married to the Marquis de Thianges. She was handsome, haughty, and wild, brilliant too with the far-famed *esprit des Mortemart*. Mademoiselle had known her always, but never so well as in the winter months she spent at Saint-Fargeau, her husband being away at the wars. She was not a peaceful inmate, and encouraged *les comtesses* in their annoying ways from sheer mischief.

"She led the most amusing life at Saint-Fargeau," says Mademoiselle. "She never got up till they told her I was ready for dinner. She came to dinner half dressed and dishevelled. She said, 'I don't care if I am seen like this by Mademoiselle's visitors; people who are good for anything will put it down to favour; fools will think I am mad, and I don't care if they do.' And well they might, for I had to send for her twenty times, and all the pages and footmen in the house were running after her, sometimes three or four pages carrying her train; and she laughing at it all. As she liked sitting up at night, after I was gone to bed (which was not early, for she sometimes kept me up till two), she used to go to her room and play games with her women, or even with my pages and valets, till four or five in the morning. . . . She used to tell us all these doings as if they

were the finest in the world, and Mademoiselle de Vandy's proper little grimaces made me laugh."

Mademoiselle de Vandy felt a certain responsibility for the Marquise, who was connected with her, being niece to her aunt's husband, the Comte de Maure.

And these were not the most startling scenes. Saint-Fargeau had a lively carnival that winter. The Chevalier de Charny, Mademoiselle's half-brother, was there, a smart young officer of eighteen or twenty; and another favourite and protégé of hers, the Chevalier de Béthune, second son of her old friends, for whom she had bought a company. Besides other gentlemen, there was M. de Vandy, the famous soldier, Mademoiselle de Vandy's brother, who offered Mademoiselle twenty captains of *carabins* to give a bad time to anybody she chose to point out! A polite offer hardly to be accepted in detail, she thought, though enemies were not lacking.

On Shrove Tuesday the Chevalier de Charny invited all the gentlemen to supper in his room, and Mademoiselle, after she and the ladies had supped, proposed to Madame de Thianges that they should look in on the party. They were joyfully welcomed. The young men began to drink her health and that of all her faithful servants, with a watery death to all traitors.

"Madame de Thianges said to the Chevalier de Béthune, 'You must drink your wine pure.' He answered, 'I will try, for the love of Mademoiselle.' For he is a very sober fellow. When his wineglass was brought, Madame de Thianges dashed it in his face; all his hair was soaked with wine; which vexed him, being clean and tidy. He was almost in a rage; but the civility owing to ladies restrained him. Fearing what she might do next, I left the room."

Madame de Thianges had not yet done with her victim. The young men came down to Mademoiselle's room, and while she was strolling in the gallery with M. de Mondevergue, a visitor from the Court, Madame de Thianges amused herself and the rest with games and talking. Some-

thing the Chevalier de Béthune said irritated her afresh. Screaming with rage, she rushed into the gallery to demand justice from Mademoiselle. Throats must be cut, she said, if the insolent Chevalier would not ask her pardon. Mademoiselle begged her to go to her room, which she did, in a terrible passion.

In the meanwhile there were high words between the unlucky Béthune, always known for his gentleness and courtesy, and another of the guests. Mademoiselle's first task was the reconciling of these two with the help of M. de Vandy, new to the task of a peacemaker. Then she led young Béthune to make his apology to Madame de Thianges. One of her occasional "*accès de dévotion*" had seized the lady—in plain prose, she had recovered her temper—and she declared herself ready to "sacrifice her resentment to God." It was high time, Mademoiselle thought, for the morning of Ash Wednesday had dawned; Mass had to be attended, with the sprinkling of ashes to quench the blaze in silly pates like these.

Mademoiselle's household and her visitors were a troublesome team for any woman to drive, and with all her courage and spirit the years at Saint-Fargeau were by no means altogether happy. Her difficulties with her ladies were increased by the frequent presence of Madame de Frontenac's husband, an eccentric, violent, wrong-headed person, who was capable of doing a great deal of mischief in Mademoiselle's affairs, though his wife, who had married him for love, had come to dislike him heartily. This couple made the text of many sermons against love which Mademoiselle preached during these years.

But the foundation of all her annoyances was the constant disagreement with her father which arose out of his unfair management of her estates. Monsieur had never been a faithful guardian. His first consideration was not the interest of Mademoiselle, but that of her half-sisters, whose possible fortunes he had long since gambled away. Mademoiselle was not the woman to endure fleecing patiently. Though

generous, she was just ; and she had a keen conviction of the rights of property. She owed a clear understanding of her own affairs to her honest and intelligent steward, Préfontaine, and she flatly refused, by his advice, to sign documents which would have removed a large part of her fortune from her own control. The money disputes between her and Monsieur were at last referred to the arbitration of Madame de Guise, her grandmother, equally interested in the Houses of Montpensier and Lorraine. Her decision was confirmed by the Royal Council, and Mademoiselle was obliged to accept it, though it seemed to her unjust. She could not forgive her grandmother, who died soon afterwards. But her old love and admiration for Monsieur still existed, and the charm of his presence never quite lost its power.

He did his best to kill her affection. There is nothing more curious in the social life of the time than the absolute personal authority of parents over their children. To a certain extent, the law protected Mademoiselle's possessions from her father's dishonesty ; but he could tyrannise over her daily life as he chose. His power of appointing or dismissing her people was an excuse for the insolence of a Frontenac or a Fiesque ; they knew she could not easily get rid of them. Monsieur took his revenge on Préfontaine, whose devotion to Mademoiselle's interest had given him some trouble, by abruptly dismissing him from her service, with other honest men whom he had employed. Mademoiselle stormed and raged and entreated, all to no purpose ; Préfontaine had to leave her. Profiting by his instructions, she took the management of her estates into her own hands, and carried it on successfully with the help of a good secretary, Guilloire by name. He remained with her till the Lauzun affair made a final breach between her and several of her old and faithful servants.

Mademoiselle tells a story which throws a pleasant light on Préfontaine's character. In order to give him the means of living, she wished to buy him an appointment as *maître des comptes*. She sent him a signed draft to fill up for him-

self with the required sum. This most disinterested of men tore up the paper and sent it back, humbly begging that she would never do such a rash thing again. He declined to accept the twenty thousand crowns she wished to give him, declaring that he had not served her long or well enough to deserve it, and that in present difficulties she would want all the money she could lay hands on.

The quarrel between Mademoiselle and her father was not entirely concerned with money matters. Having, for his own part, shaken off his old friends of the Fronde and settled down at Blois into a somewhat obscure and dismal loyalty, it made him furious to know that his daughter kept up a lively correspondence with the Prince de Condé, still a rebel on the frontier. Mademoiselle, with no fear of consequences, even received and hid Condé's messengers. The mystery of a certain Saler, whom she kept for some days at Saint-Fargeau unknown even to her own household, gave rise to various legends as to a secret guest of hers, which apparently exist to this day. Gaston feared nothing so much as to be dragged into any new conspiracies, especially as there was some talk of the marriage of his second daughter, Mademoiselle d'Orléans, with the King.

It seems that at the height of his quarrel with Mademoiselle he did not spare threats of prisons and convents. And one day, according to her, his secretary Goulas said to him, "But, monseigneur, the Romans had the power of life and death over their children. Are you not great prince enough to do as you please with Mademoiselle?" "One would have thought," she says, "that His Royal Highness would have had him thrown out of the window. But he contented himself with saying nothing, which did not please me; for in my melancholy reveries I reflected that he had not answered Goulas, and that he was the son of a Médicis. And though the Queen, my grandmother, was a very good woman, with none of the faults of her race and her nation, diseases sometimes pass over a generation without our knowledge."

Then again she reflected that only the Médicis poison in her own veins could have suggested such thoughts. And finally she tried to console herself with the flattering conviction that she was a thorough Bourbon, and therefore by nature good. And she ended by thanking God's providence for the health and sanity which helped her to rise above her unhappy circumstances.

During these years Mademoiselle had a characteristic proposal of marriage from the Duc de Neubourg, who sent a letter with his portrait to Saint-Fargeau by the hands of a Jesuit father, not the most diplomatic of envoys. Mademoiselle gives an amusing account of the interview.

"He is the best man in the world," said the Jesuit. "You will be only too happy with him. His wife, who was a sister of the King of Poland, died of joy at seeing him on his return from a journey."

Mademoiselle replied, "You alarm me. I should be afraid to die of loving him too much. Therefore I will not marry him."

To Monsieur, who addressed her formally on the subject of the Neubourg marriage, she gave a cold and haughty answer. His absence from the Court, she said, must have made him forget both her position and his own. Otherwise, he could never have thought of marrying her to a small German prince.

CHAPTER II

1653-1657

“Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious Court?”

JOURNEYS IN TOURAINE—THE RESTORATION OF CHAMPIGNY—
FORGES-LES-EAUX—A VISIT FROM MADAME DE LONGUEVILLE—A PRAC-
TICAL JOKE—THE PRINCESS OF ORANGE—QUEEN CHRISTINA OF
SWEDEN

THOUGH Mademoiselle was banished from the Court and from Paris during those five years, she was free to move about elsewhere in France as she pleased. She paid several rather stiff visits to Monsieur and Madame, at Blois and at Orléans, both before and after the affair of the *comptes de tutelle*. She always delighted in the smiling landscape, the sunny sweetness of the country of the Loire, and she writes with keen enjoyment of a journey in Touraine in the summer of 1653.

The Marquis de Sourdis, her old friend of Orléans, was now governor of Amboise, and he received her with such thunders of cannon as she had never heard before. “He treated me very magnificently,” she says—probably with more packets of his famous *confitures*. The next day she dined at Chenonceaux with the Duc de Beaufort, who entertained her just as splendidly as in old days. She lingered at Tours, and exchanged visits with Madame de Montbazon, banished to her château of Couzières. Here the famous beauty died tragically of suppressed smallpox in the spring of 1657, after only six hours’ illness.

All the magnates of Touraine visited Mademoiselle at Tours, where she was lodged in the Archbishop’s palace, and they all invited her to their various country-houses.

She went to Valençay, then in course of being splendidly rebuilt, and found herself in an enchanted palace of beautiful arcades and galleries, full of the gayest company. She once more visited M. and Madame de Béthune at Selles, and enjoyed the collection of historical curiosities which had interested her even as a child, when old Philippe de Béthune, her grandfather's friend, had shown them to her. He was now dead ; but the house was full of wonderful portraits and manuscripts, and Mademoiselle found herself so well entertained by these, and by reading King Henry's letters, that she would willingly have stayed more days than one.

She had other objects of interest in Tours and the neighbouring country. It was on this occasion that she adopted young Louis, son of Gaston, commonly known as *le Mignon*, gave him the more manly name of Chevalier de Charny, and carried him off to a better education than he could have among the *bourgeois* of Tours. She visited Saumur, where she was again received with salvos of artillery. "I was not treated like a demoiselle in banishment," she says with satisfaction. At Fontevrault, Madame Jeanne-Baptiste de Bourbon, whose long reign was not yet near its end, welcomed her niece with joy and affection. History does not say whether the poor dancing lunatic of sixteen years before still lived to amuse Mademoiselle.

She visited an estate of her own, Châtellerault, with a half-ruined castle where she did not care to stay. Her heart was still with the lost Champigny ; once again kneeling in the chapel where the old Montpensiers lay, and thinking tenderly of all who were gone, she felt herself inspired to rescue the place from the alien hands into which it had fallen.

It is pleasant to know that her suit for the recovery of Champigny, begun this year in the Paris courts, came to a happy end a few years later. She succeeded triumphantly. The Duc de Richelieu had to restore Champigny, receiving back Bois-le-Vicomte, which the Cardinal had forcibly exchanged for it. It was further ordered that the Duc should

either rebuild the château, pulled down by the Cardinal, or pay for its being rebuilt; officials being sent by the courts to value the destroyed buildings and devastated woods. The latter plan was decided on, and Mademoiselle received a much larger sum than anybody expected—no less than 550,000 *livres*. She revisited Champigny as its owner in the autumn of 1657, soon after her reconciliation with the Court.

"Their joy at seeing me was inexpressible," she writes. ". . . All the nobility of the neighbourhood met me in arms; even the clergy came singing, and hautboys and bagpipes played the dances of Poitou; it was all comical enough."

She lodged for some weeks in what remained of the old château, spending the time in most practical fashion with her men of business, builders and foresters, and not without some annoyance from impertinent hangers-on of the Richelieu family. She was only driven away by winter and bad weather, and narrowly escaped floods which made the roads impassable. A few hours after she had crossed the Indre at Azay-le-Rideau the bridge was under water.

Saint-Fargeau, though pleasant enough in summer, seems to have been in those days an unhealthy winter residence. People concerned themselves little about these things in the seventeenth century, but moats and ponds, miles of thickly wooded and undrained country, the damp walls, the shivering chills of a house so long neglected—all this was not without its effect even on a hardy woman like Mademoiselle. She was troubled with bad headaches and sore throats; and the feverish attacks to which she had always been subject became more violent. Evidently, too, the worries of life affected her nerves.

She consulted two great men of the Paris Faculty, Doctors Guenaut and Brayer. They did not find much the matter; in fact, they assured her she would live a hundred years. But they wisely recommended the tonic waters of Forges, and thus provided Mademoiselle with just the distraction she wanted. Forges, growing every day

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more fashionable, was a favourite resort of hers for the rest of her life.

Forges-les-Eaux, now a little-known watering-place in Eastern Normandy, in the old Pays de Bray, has a witness to its history in the names of its three springs—La ReINETTE, La Royale, and La Cardinale. In the Middle Ages, as one might suppose, there were ironworks at Forges. The wholesome digestive properties of its water were only discovered late in the sixteenth century. Valois courtiers and Norman magnates went there to be cured, and even the dangers of travelling in a very wild tract of country and in times of civil war did not keep invalids away. The Duc de Longueville, governor of Normandy, encouraged the growth of the place; doctors wrote about it; Jacques Cousinot, physician to Louis XIII, sent his royal master there. Queen Anne and Cardinal de Richelieu followed the King. The fame of Forges was made. "*L'élite de la France s'y rendit en foule*," says M. Bouquet, and this popularity lasted all through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Mademoiselle first visited Forges in the summer of 1656. She came from Saint-Fargeau by way of Fontainebleau and the Forest of Saint-Germain, with a grand equipage and train of coaches and baggage mules. For the first time since her exile from Paris she had a distant view of her beloved city.

After sleeping at Pontoise and crossing a ferry at Conflans—the bridge having been broken in the wars—she dined at Serifontaine, and gave herself four hours to reach Forges through the forest. Plunging through wild and narrow tracks, by farm lanes, past lonely windmills, across stretches of heathery moor, her people lost their way, and Mademoiselle, without much enjoyment, watched sunset and moonrise in that silent world of woods. After twelve hours, at four o'clock in the morning, the barking of dogs welcomed her cavalcade to Forges. She heard Mass in the village church, walked round by the fountain, where a few early gazers were already watching for her, tasted the water, not impossibly nasty, and went to bed.

A little court soon gathered round Mademoiselle at Forges, and she found her cure very agreeable. The day, from six to nine, seemed hardly long enough for all she had to do. She was among the earliest and most sociable of the crowd of invalids who appeared at the springs in the first freshness of the morning. They all made acquaintance with each other, chattering without formality. Mademoiselle enjoyed herself all the more because Madame de Frontenac did not drink the waters and Madame de Fiesque was lazy. She could not resist telling her "griefs," on this subject of her disagreeable household, to two pleasant men, M. de Berville and M. de Brays, whom she met in these early water-drinking strolls. Brays was an old soldier, Berville a diplomatist. They both listened and sympathised cordially. Mademoiselle, always human and natural, was aware that princesses did not usually confide their affairs to gentlemen they had never seen before. She said as much to Berville and Brays, adding, "But it seems to me that honest men are one's best friends, wherever one may meet them; and one rarely meets them at all."

She spent the mornings strolling in the garden of the Capuchin Convent, which was arranged with sheltered alleys and summer-houses for the comfort of invalids. She was exceedingly amused by the company to be seen there: "monks, nuns, priests, Huguenot ministers, people of all lands and all professions—a diverting diversity," says Mademoiselle. All the persons of quality in Normandy came to pay her their respects; ladies from Rouen and deputies from its Parliament.

After walking and attending Mass, it was necessary to change one's dress. Furs and woollens, even in the dog-days, were worn at Forges in the morning; it was chilly work swallowing so much water. But people dressed in silks for their dinner at noon, when Mademoiselle, for one, found herself ravenously hungry. After dinner she received visitors; at three o'clock a troupe of comedians from Rouen, engaged by her, amused the company. Supper was at six;

then again the garden of the Capuchins, and litanies in their church. At nine o'clock everybody went to bed.

The visitor who interested Mademoiselle the most during her stay at Forges was her ancient aversion, the Duchesse de Longueville. That heroine of romance was a changed creature; her wild oats all sown, her fighting days over. For her brother's sake, she had kept the flame of civil war alight in the south many months after the King's triumph at Paris over the Fronde. It was not till the summer of 1653 that the Bordeaux rebellion, known as *l'Ormée*, came to its end, and that Madame de Longueville made her submission to the King. Later still, after some months spent with her saintly aunt, Madame de Montmorency, at the Convent of the Visitation at Moulins, she returned to her forgiving husband. She was now living with him in Normandy, convinced, at thirty-seven, of the nothingness of earthly glory and the falseness of men. La Rochefoucauld, as a lover, had behaved with the meanness of a gentleman too cynical to believe in chivalry. Conti, her devoted younger brother, had secured his own fortunes by marrying Anne-Marie Martinozzi, niece of the now mighty Cardinal.

Madame de Longueville, as all her biographers tell us, had lost none of her old charm. She had still her lovely pearl-like complexion, her angelic gentleness of manner, and this no longer veiled either a languid scorn of her fellow-creatures or a passionate need of any kind of excitement. She had always a cultivated mind, and in her new turn towards religion and self-denial had lost neither tact nor brilliancy.

The two princesses who met at Forges were in many ways as great a contrast as they had ever been, but life had taught them both some lessons. Madame de Longueville, more complex and more critical, may not have shared her cousin's feelings of frank joy and delight at their meeting; but if not, she dissembled very well. Mademoiselle, down-right and single-minded, was perfectly satisfied. "She was as friendly as she could be," she writes; "and as she is the



THE DUCHESS DE LONGUEVILLE

most lovable person in the world, it is easy to love her. We talked of Monsieur her brother, then of my wretched affair with His Royal Highness, and of the conduct of those women, which she highly disapproved. She made me confess that I had been wrong to judge her unfavourably and to write a thousand disagreeable things about her to M. her brother. I asked her pardon."

In consequence of this new understanding, Madame de Fiesque found herself ill received when she complained to Madame de Longueville of Mademoiselle's various faults. The Duchess was both grieved and astonished, and spoke her mind to the lady-in-waiting with a plainness which displeased her. She had a certain authority, the Comte de Fiesque belonging to the Prince de Condé's household in Flanders.

Both before and after this visit to Forges, Mademoiselle had interviews which amused her. At Corbeil, where she stayed two days on her journey, a crowd of people visited her, among them the young Duke of York, the Duc de Guise and his sister, and the Princesse de Lixein, elder sister of Madame.

Many years before, known as Princesse de Phalsbourg, and adored by the unlucky Puylaurens, this lady had been the chief instrument in the marriage of Gaston and Marguerite. She was now a woman of fifty. Mademoiselle, who had heard of her wonderful beauty, was disappointed to find her "almost frightful." She was exceedingly polite, however, and set out with Mademoiselle and her other visitors to lunch with a royal official, M. Esselin, at Essonne, close to Corbeil. As they passed through the gardens an accident happened; it sounds like one of the practical jokes which French society used to tolerate. Mademoiselle was walking in advance with her uncle, the Duc de Guise, and they were passing through a grotto on the way, when without any warning fountains of water started suddenly up from the pavement, drenching the courtly crowd that followed them. Everybody fled in a panic. Poor Madame de Lixein fell

down, and everybody else tumbled over her. When Mademoiselle saw her again, she was a terrible spectacle: her face covered with mud, her dress torn to ribbons—"enfin déconcertée de la plus plaisante manière du monde, et je ne m'en puis souvenir sans rire. Je lui ris au nez," says the heartless Princess. Luckily Madame de Lixein had good breeding and good temper enough to treat the thing as a joke. She was quite ready to laugh at herself, and so has earned the reward of being handed down to us as a "personne d'esprit."

At Chilly, near Corbeil, where there was a splendid château built by the Marquis d'Effiat in Louis XIII's reign, Mademoiselle received a visit from her aunt, the Queen of England. Henrietta was accompanied by a large suite and by three of her children; Mary, the widowed Princess of Orange, the Duke of York, and Princess Henrietta, the future Madame, now a thin but pretty child of twelve years old. The Queen's object in this meeting was to present her eldest daughter to her cousin, Mademoiselle, who had never yet seen her.

If we are to judge by her portraits, the mother of William III was the least attractive of Charles I's children. A showy-looking woman, she quite lacked the delicate piquancy of Henrietta. The good taste and artistic feeling that belonged to her family is not shown in her portraits. At Hampton Court she may be seen in a mantle covered with red feathers, a white turban on her head also decked with red feathers. Thick dark eyebrows, red cheeks, a long nose and a weak chin; dark ringlets hanging on each side, the usual pearls and the tapering fingers of her day. By her mother's account, Mary had a passion for dress and ornaments. It was considered etiquette for her to visit Mademoiselle in mourning, though her young husband had been dead six years, but her pearls were splendid, her bracelets clasped with large diamonds, her fingers covered with rings.

"My daughter is not like me," said the Queen to Mademoiselle. "She loves magnificence; has jewels and money; is extravagant. I tell her every day that she ought to save;

that I was great as she, and greater, and that she can see what I am now."

It does not appear that Mademoiselle took any particular fancy to her cousin of Orange. Mary had her merits: she had fought hard in Holland for the rights of her little son; she was ready to make any sacrifice to help her brother to his throne of England. Gossip, which may have been as false as the slanders which pursued her mother, had a good deal to say about her way of living since her husband's death. But nothing of all this would have affected Mademoiselle. Though extremely open to flattery and to every sign of consideration, her native shrewdness had a way of seeing through flatterers. They must, at least, have some charm to attract her. And Mary overdid things a little. Her first embrace was too rapturous to please Mademoiselle. "A person I had never seen before." She talked rather too much, telling her cousin how she had longed to see her, how unwilling she had been to leave France without that pleasure; how the King, her brother, had spoken of Mademoiselle with so much affection that she loved her without knowing her.

Queen Henrietta listened to her daughter's eloquence with a touch of amusement, and struck in with polite speeches of her own.

"Never, since my daughter came to France, have I heard her talk so much. You have great power over her, and I can see that if you two were long together, you would govern her completely!"

Later on Henrietta talked to her niece more confidentially. After expressing tender sympathy in her troublesome affairs with Monsieur, she began on the old subject which for a dozen years had never been far from her thoughts.

"And the poor King of England! You are so unfeeling as not to inquire for him."

"It is my duty to listen without interrupting Your Majesty," Mademoiselle replied. "I was waiting for an opportunity to make my inquiries."

"Alas, he is so foolish that he loves you still," said the

Queen. "When he left France, he begged me to tell you that he was in despair at taking no leave of you. I would not send you word, for fear of making you vain. But now that I see you, I cannot keep my good resolutions. Think—if you had married him, you would not be in your present position with your father. You would be your own mistress, with a household of your own choice; and by this time you would be well settled in England. I am persuaded that the poor wretch will never be happy without you. If you had married him, he and I would agree better than we do; you would have made him live on better terms with me."

Mademoiselle answered, "If he cannot live at peace with Your Majesty, why should he do so with another person?" a remark which made Henrietta break out into praises of her son.

It was a brilliant assembly that day at Chilly. All the great people in Paris—French, English, Dutch—had crowded out to pay their respects to the Queen and the Princesses. They held a real court in the great hall, and Mademoiselle gave a magnificent dinner to her aunt and cousins. Every one felt, probably, that the end of her years of exile was very near, and that it was worth while to pay distinguished attention to a princess who would soon take her right place in the world again.

Among the guests was the still beautiful Madame de Châtillon. Since the death of the Duc de Nemours she had consoled herself with many lovers and many adventures, not of the most respectable. At this moment the Prince de Condé and the King of England, besides various lesser names, were supposed to be rivals in her favour, and gossip whispered that King Charles meant to marry her. Queen Henrietta said a word to her niece on the subject, defending him from such a suspicion. Mademoiselle looked at Madame de Châtillon with interest and pity.

"Nothing could be more splendid," she says. "She had a gown of flame-coloured taffetas, all embroidered with silver cord. She was more red and white than ever; with more

diamonds in her ears, on her fingers, on her arms ; enfin dans une dernière magnificence."

Some years later Madame de Châtillon married Christian Louis, Duke of Mecklenburg. She is mentioned frequently, as "Madame de Meckelbourg," in the later memoirs of the seventeenth century. She became very miserly in her old age, heaping up money and jewels while France was wasted with famine, in a way which shocked the generous mind of Madame de Sévigné.

It was during this same visit to the neighbourhood of Paris that Mademoiselle, with the King's permission, made her first acquaintance with Queen Christina of Sweden. That extraordinary woman had been travelling for two years, and had been five or six weeks in France, on her return from Rome, when Mademoiselle saw her. The interview took place at M. Esselin's house at Essonne, which seems to have been a beautiful place in the style of an Italian villa, much visited by royalties.

Mademoiselle was dying with curiosity to see the Queen, whose eccentricities were the talk of Europe, but she took prodigious forethought for her own dignity—"the honour of France," she called it—insisting on a *chaise à bras* being provided for her in the royal presence. Christina was not the woman to make any difficulties on points of etiquette. Mademoiselle was informed that the Queen honoured her person even more than her rank, and would treat her exactly as she wished to be treated.

She drove over from Petitbourg, where she was visiting her old enemy and her father's old favourite the Abbé de la Rivière, now Bishop of Langres. It was towards eight o'clock on a September evening. She found the Queen, with a crowd of people, looking on at a ballet in M. Esselin's Italian saloon. The Duc de Guise and other gentlemen were present, representing the French Court ; Mademoiselle was attended by the Comtesse de Béthune, Madame Bouthillier, and her own ladies.

Queen Christina received her politely and kindly, and the

chaise à bras was in readiness, though benches had to be jumped over to reach it. The Queen herself was hardly such a figure of fun as Mademoiselle had hoped and expected. She was small and fair, with blue eyes, "like a pretty little boy." She was dressed in a grey silk petticoat trimmed with gold and silver lace and a flame-coloured bodice; her handkerchief, of Genoese point, was knotted with a flame-coloured ribbon; she wore a fair wig, and carried in her hand a hat with black feathers. She talked agreeably, asking Mademoiselle questions about her family; when the Comte de Béthune was presented to her, she spoke with interest of his manuscripts and other treasures. She was, in fact, though Mademoiselle seems hardly to have known it, one of the first art patrons and collectors of the day.

But her manners were skin-deep. A comedy followed the ballet; "and then," says Mademoiselle, "she startled me. In praising anything that pleased her, she used oaths—elle juroit Dieu. She lolled in her chair, flung her legs from side to side, threw them over the arms; in fact I never saw such postures except in the two buffoons, Trivelin and Jodelet. She repeated the verses she liked; she chattered about all sorts of things. . . . Sometimes she falls into a profound reverie; sighs deeply; then recovers herself suddenly, like a person waking with a start; she is quite extraordinary."

After the play there were fireworks, some of which went off so near the Queen and her guest that Mademoiselle was frightened, and showed it. The Queen laughed at her. Was it possible that a demoiselle who had done such great things could be afraid? Mademoiselle answered that she was brave only on special occasions.

The Queen gratified her by praises of her friend the Prince de Condé, and also by a great many questions and much sympathy as to her private difficulties. "She wished to do her best to reconcile me with the Court and with His Royal Highness. I was not born to lead a country life. I was born to be a Queen, and she wished passionately that I

might be Queen of France; it would be for the political advantage of the State. I was the handsomest, the most charming, the richest, and the greatest Princess in Europe; . . . and she meant to talk about it to Monsieur le Cardinal."

Mademoiselle thanked her for her obliging remarks, but begged her to do no such thing; that dream was laid aside for ever.

Christina's flatteries, however, made a very good impression. Mademoiselle was so much struck with her friendliness that she exerted herself to see her again later in the autumn, when she was at Montargis on her way back from visiting the Court at Compiègne. Mademoiselle was then at Pont. She started at dawn with her two strongest companions, Madame de Thianges and Madame de Frontenac, and reached Montargis at ten o'clock at night. She was told in Italian that the Queen had gone to bed. She pretended not to understand the language, and insisted on sending up her name. Christina received her in bed, and this time Mademoiselle found her more bizarre than charming, with a napkin tied round her bald head and very mean surroundings. But what could you expect from a "Queen of the Goths," who had upset the Court at Compiègne by her tactless behaviour! Actually, by way of pleasing young Louis XIV, she had advised him to marry Mademoiselle Mancini. "If I were in your place I should marry the woman I loved!" This showed what her flatteries were worth, and Mademoiselle seems to have regretted her hurried journey.

Queen Christina, travelling about without one single woman in attendance, and followed everywhere by her Italian lover, Sentinelli, horrified even the society of that day. Plenty of people might be as bad, but few were so barefaced, and with most of the Queen's French acquaintances disgust succeeded amusement.

Mademoiselle visited her once again formally at Fontainebleau, not long after she had committed the most terrible action of her life—the murder of her equerry, Monaldeschi.

In Christina's own view the man was a traitor, and she saw no difference between cutting off his head in Sweden and having him stabbed to death in France. Opinion there was quite able to appreciate her view ; but the deed was considered unwomanly, barbarous, cruel, and worse still, wanting in courtesy. The Queen of Sweden had no business, they said, to kill her equerry in a palace belonging to the King of France, staining his beautiful *Galerie des Cerfs* with pools of blood that no scrubbing would cleanse away. Little wonder that in spite of Christina's renewed flatteries and civilities, Mademoiselle "could not help thinking of what she had done."

CHAPTER III

1657-1658

“ Volons ! plus de noires pensées !—
Ce sont les tambours que j’entends.
Voici les dames entassées,
Les tentes de pourpre dressées,
Les fleurs et les drapeaux flottans.”

MADemoiselle's RELIGION—THE ABBEYS OF JOUARRE AND PORT ROYAL—MADemoiselle's RETURN TO THE COURT—THE KING AND HIS BROTHER—THE CARDINAL AND HIS NIECES—PARISIAN GAETIES—THE PURCHASE OF EU

ONE cannot perhaps, with any justice, call Mademoiselle de Montpensier a religious woman. She was too *personnelle*, as the French say—too narrow of outlook, too imperious, too well contented with herself, too tolerant of vice in high places, though angry enough when people of her world degraded themselves to the level of the *canaille*. She was incapable of the spiritual enthusiasm which carried such women as the Duchesse de Longueville and the Princesse Palatine so far towards heaven in the reaction from the fiery politics and pleasures of their day.

Mademoiselle, one may say, knew neither the depths nor the heights of women like these. She had her instincts of right and wrong, and she was loyal to them. It was partly, no doubt, a matter of temperament, but partly too a certain moral strength and straightness, a proud self-respect, rare enough in that world where the majority of men and women were ruled by their passions. Mademoiselle had learnt from Corneille that self-conquest was both possible and necessary. But the seed of Corneille's ideas must have fallen on a nature prepared to receive it. All the heroes and heroines of the Fronde were his listeners ; but with most of them love

of wild adventure—fully shared by Mademoiselle—was the sole consequence.

Mademoiselle was not a saint, but she was a good woman according to the standard of her day. Her charities and benefactions were large. She kept the rules of the Church strictly, liked sermons, took an interest in ecclesiastical matters, and found considerable pleasure in visiting convents and abbeys, where she was not a too disturbing element. The nuns were delighted to welcome this friendly Princess, who amused their generally simple minds in various ways.

Mademoiselle was fond of spending Church festivals at the Abbey of Jouarre, near Meaux, where the services, she says, were conducted with peculiar dignity, and the gardens were spacious and beautiful. The Abbess, Henriette de Lorraine, well known for her disputes with Bossuet, her Bishop, as to the privileges of her office, and for her retirement to Port Royal in the days of its decline, was an early acquaintance of Mademoiselle. She was the youngest of the three daughters of Madame de Chevreuse. That *Amazone française*, as the Parisians called her, had disposed of two of her daughters in religion. The eldest, Anne-Marie, died young as Abbess of Pont-aux-Dames. The second, Charlotte, with all her mother's beauty and impatient temper but little of her wits, was dragged about in exile as a girl; was a political puppet during the Fronde, flattered and made use of by the worthless Retz; then, still the victim of selfish intrigue, was for a short time promised in marriage to the Prince de Conti; and died in 1652 of malignant fever, after a few hours' illness.

Mademoiselle gives a pleasant sketch of her visit to the Abbey of Jouarre for the festival of All Saints, in the last year of her exile from the Court. She met there the Bishop of Amiens, François Faure, a courtly and agreeable personage, who had begun life as a Franciscan monk and had preached himself into eminence. Mademoiselle approved highly of his sermon. She praises the fine service in the

abbey church, but did her best, it seems, to distract the good nuns from their prayers.

"My great-aunts," she says, "Anne and Jeanne de Bourbon, were Abbesses of Jouarre. As I passed into the tribune, I rapped with my hand on the desk to make the nuns look up; the old ones said that my aunts did just the same."

About this time, purely from curiosity and for the amusement of doing something not quite orthodox, Mademoiselle visited the famous Abbey of Port-Royal-des-Champs. She had evidently been reading both *Les Provinciales* and the Jesuit answers to Pascal's attack, and her remarks are rather interesting, for they show the kind of impression made on the lay mind by these controversies. Mademoiselle is a fair representative of the natural, just, orthodox, unimaginative lay mind of her day. To her, the whole business appeared simple enough. Jansenius, she declares, died in the odour of sanctity, and in his writings on grace had merely followed St. Augustine. His follower, the Abbé de Saint-Cyran, a learned and excellent man, had been thrown into prison by Richelieu—who could do nothing right in Mademoiselle's eyes, one must remember—probably because he was afraid of the new light thrown on religious matters by good men.

The history of Port-Royal need not be told here. Mademoiselle describes how the abbey was transferred to Paris, and then, when the surrounding country became safe once more, how the Mother House in the fields was again inhabited. She dwells on the devotion of the Arnauld family, on that wonderful life of faith and works, the sincerity of which could never be doubted, though its expediency and entire orthodoxy were questioned by the "illustre congrégation" of the Jesuits. No women and very few men, in Mademoiselle's opinion, should be allowed to speak on matters of theology, and she acknowledges the learning and zeal of the Jesuits. But the moral strictness and the daily labours of the hermits of Port-Royal-des-Champs, who had lived there all through the civil wars, gained her sincere admiration.

"They served God with zeal," she writes, "and their neighbour with charity. They wrote books and made admirable translations ; worked in their gardens, helped the poor ; in short, led a life most unusual. For people of the world, they made penitence stricter than the religious generally do ; . . . this particularly enraged the Jesuits, who called them *Jansenists* . . . such a name might scare people away by suggesting heresy. . . . In their daily lives they are admirable ; they preach and write with eloquence, and do a wonderful work for the glory of the Church and the Saints. . . . Their devotion is sincere ; retired from the world, disinterested as to riches and honours, charitable to the last degree. If their doctrine is wrong, we must hope that leading such good lives they may obtain by prayer the light necessary for knowing this and amending it."

Such was the impression made on Mademoiselle when she visited Port-Royal-des-Champs, fresh from the strong pleading of "Louis de Montalte." She inquired first for M. Arnauld d'Andilly, whom she had known in her youth, both at the Luxembourg and the Hôtel de Rambouillet. He received her in his garden cell.

"I glanced at his table. He said, 'You are curious ; you wish to see how I amuse myself : I am making a translation from St. Theresa.' I thanked him, saying, 'I love that saint, and shall be very glad to see her works well represented ; the translations till now have been bad.'

"I entered the convent, where I found a numerous community ; the nuns appeared devout, innocent, simple, and unaffected. I thought the church very solemn. I went all over the convent, looking at everything, expecting to find some great difference between this and others I have seen ; I found it exactly like all other reformed abbeys of the Order of Saint Bernard. The nuns were puzzled enough ; when I saw images of the saints in their cells, I cried out, 'Ah ! there are saints !' but they dared not question me.

"Going out, M. d'Andilly said to me, 'Well, you have seen relics and images of the saints, revered by our sisters ;

you see they have their rosaries.' I said to him, 'It is true; I had heard that such things were little considered here, and I am glad to have seen for myself.' M. d'Andilly said, 'You are going to Court; you might bear witness to the Queen of what you have seen here.' I assured him that I would willingly do so; he promised me the community's prayers and his own, and said many good words, persuading me to a devout life. I went away well satisfied with all I had seen and heard."

It was not a likely moment, perhaps, for Arnauld d'Andilly's words to bear much fruit. A reconciliation between Mademoiselle and her father had been brought about by the efforts of the Ducs de Beaufort and de Guise and the Comte de Béthune. After this it was not long before Monsieur, now on friendly terms with the Court, arranged with Mazarin that Mademoiselle should be received back into the royal favour. She was invited to join the Court at Sedan, where the King and his mother were watching Turenne's campaign against the Spaniards and the still rebellious Prince de Condé.

The invitation reached Mademoiselle at Saint-Cloud, where all Paris had crowded to welcome her. Among other old playfellows came the new Duchesse de Nemours, the Duc de Longueville's brilliant daughter, formerly *grande frondeuse*, who had just made what everybody thought a very odd marriage.

Charles-Amédée, Duc de Nemours, killed in the duel with Beaufort, had been succeeded by his brother Henry, Archbishop of Reims without being a priest, like the Duc de Guise before him. He seemed devoted to his profession, and had seriously thought of being ordained. He was not rich, was nothing in society, being "scholastically minded," and was disfigured by disease. Suddenly, says Mademoiselle, he began paying court to Mademoiselle de Longueville, who was in every way his superior. Great matches had been proposed for her: the Duke of Mantua, the Duke of York even the King of England; for she was one of the richest

women in France. Older than Mademoiselle, she must have been more than thirty at this time, and she lived a quiet life, devoted to books and withdrawn from the world. She thus had plenty of leisure and opportunity to reflect on what she was doing. "*Elle souffroit ce garçon ; il soupoit tous les soirs chez elle ; enfin elle s'embarquoit furieusement.*" A similar love of books may have been the attraction. But she wept at her wedding ; the poor Duke was taken ill at the church door ; and Madame de Nemours left him drinking asses' milk when she visited Mademoiselle at Saint-Cloud, a few weeks later.

Mademoiselle started for Sedan in the last week of July. Not wishing to pass through Paris, she made her first day's journey by cross-roads, lost her way, and wandered till long after midnight in the silent moonlit country. At Dammartin she joined the Comte de Béthune and a large party of courtiers, who had arranged to travel together because of the disturbed state of the country. The roads were bad, and the fords of the rivers dangerous. All that part of France, desolated by years of war, was still subject to raids from the enemy in Flanders and on the frontier. The woods near Reims were said to be infested with "*coueurs de Rocroy*" ; the peasants were all fighting men ; and Cardinal Mazarin sent a strong escort of horse to convey Mademoiselle safely from Reims to Sedan. They also had charge of two cart-loads of money, which M. Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Mazarin's intendant, was bringing to his master. Mademoiselle had a good deal of talk with Colbert and was pleased with his intelligence. But she would have laughed if any one had then prophesied that the Duchesse de Chevreuse would marry her grandson to Colbert's daughter.

Mademoiselle arrived at Sedan on the 1st of August, and found the Queen and her ladies amusing themselves in a meadow. Her Royal Highness dashed upon the scene with characteristic clatter, more suited to a victorious heroine than to a repentant rebel.

"I arrived in that meadow at full speed, my coach escorted

by gendarmes and light cavalry, their trumpets sounding in a triumphant manner. Approaching the Queen's coach, they halted and formed up between hers and mine. I descended twenty paces away, and kissed the Queen's dress and her hands. She did me the honour to embrace me, and said she was very glad to see me; that at one time she had been angry with me; that she had borne me no grudge because of the Orléans affair; but for that of the Porte St. Antoine she would gladly have strangled me." This amiable instinct seems to have been natural to the Queen, who wished on one memorable occasion to strangle the Coadjutor.

Mademoiselle took it meekly, and Anne went on to assure her that all was now forgotten, and to pay her compliments on her improved appearance; they had not met for six years. Mademoiselle pointed out the grey hairs that were showing themselves among her fine brown locks. She had put on no powder that morning, in order that the Queen might see how long her exile had been.

That exile, with all its particulars, interested Anne of Austria very much for the moment. Mademoiselle had to answer a thousand questions as to her life at Saint-Fargeau, with all its amusements and annoyances. The Queen expressed sympathy as to the quarrel with Monsieur; she knew him well. During the few days that passed before the King's return from Montmédy she occupied herself very much with her niece; she gossiped with her, arranged her hair, showed off her own new jewellery; behaved, in short, like an ordinary good-natured aunt. Mademoiselle enjoyed the changed atmosphere; never since her infancy had she been on such pleasant terms with the wife of Louis XIII.

Her cousin the King, now a spirited lad of nineteen, came galloping back to Sedan as soon as Montmédy had surrendered to his troops, the garrison marching out unharmed. He arrived wet and muddy at two in the afternoon; the Queen had put off dinner for him. He came straight in, *négligé* but handsome, and greeted his cousin with laughing ease. The Queen said, "Let me present a young lady who

is very sorry for being naughty ; she will be very good in future." The boy, like any other boy, had nothing to say to that : he began telling stories of his siege and of an adventure in the woods on the way back to Sedan. His coach had been attacked in a hollow called the Mouse-hole by ten or twelve free-lances from a little château hidden in the forest. He had mounted his horse, chased the men, and captured them.

" You had better send them back, as it was you who took them," said the wise Queen-mother ; and she then asked what had become of her younger son.

Philippe, then of Anjou, did not naturally care for risky adventures with highwaymen. Nobody was surprised that he had remained safe in the coach while his brother risked a more valuable life among the trees of that wood haunted by musketeers. But nobody cried shame upon him. The King quietly remarked, "*Il n'étoit point botté.*"

The pretty, attractive boy, with whom Mademoiselle was already half in love, for she saw or fancied signs that the King and Queen meant her to marry him, arrived "*ajusté au dernier point*" soon afterwards. He was dressed entirely in grey, with flame-coloured ribbons—a favourite combination. He paid Mademoiselle all kinds of attention, embraced her with jokes and flatteries which she cordially returned, took her into his own room to see his jewellery, and treated her, then and afterwards, like a favourite sister. She, who always had something of the child about her, and who loved amusement at thirty just as much as at fifteen, was quite ready to live as a comrade with this new little Monsieur. The spoilt creature, frivolous and mischief-making, had been ruined by the effeminate bringing-up that his mother and Mazarin thought necessary in order to keep him in the shadow of his elder brother. They dressed him as a girl, they made him the plaything of the Queen's women, and taught him to live for nothing but sloth, dress, and gossip. Mademoiselle, to do her justice, tried to make a man of him, but at seventeen he was already past praying for.

Mademoiselle knew that the meeting with Cardinal Mazarin was quite as important as that with her royal aunt and cousins. The great man was at the very height of his power, and also, for sufficient reasons, of his unpopularity. He was more grasping, more miserly, and more tyrannical than ever. Madame Arvède Barine gives a wonderful picture of him at this time, when even his faithful slave, the Queen, could not help complaining of his odious temper to Madame de Motteville. It was no longer necessary for Mazarin to dissemble, and the society he had conquered knew him in his true colours. He was no longer even outwardly "doux et bénin." He took toll of everybody and on everything. The universal agent and middleman, he sold all appointments, and the salary of all officials grew smaller in passing through his hands. It was the same with the army's pay and food, with the King's entertainments and the keeping up of his palaces. As long as the Cardinal's rule lasted, Louis had no money but what was grudgingly doled out to him.

Madame Arvède Barine points out justly that Mazarin's real greatness, his political and diplomatic genius, was hardly understood in his own day. Few knew or cared to know what he was doing for France beyond the frontier, and his work as Richelieu's successor in establishing absolute monarchy was not really welcome to the country. The monarchy had to be, and the crushed nobility of France had to accept it; they did so, and crawled to its feet; but though advancing civilisation no doubt demanded it, the thing was as evil for them as for the million peasants who were taxed to pay its expenses. A fine race of men was spoilt, when fighting nobles were turned into bowing courtiers.

Outwardly the Cardinal met Mademoiselle with all possible sweetness. Etiquette required that the first friendly advances should come from her. Curtseying low to his Eminence, she said to the Queen, "I think it would be well, Madame, after all that has passed, if Your Majesty were to command us to embrace. For my part, I would cordially

obey." Mazarin came forward, knelt, and embraced her knees. She raised and embraced him, and they exchanged affectionate compliments. Mademoiselle, less candid than with her old enemy the Prince de Condé, assured the Cardinal that she had never disliked him.

On the following day she took him into her coach, and his remarks made her laugh.

"If any one had told you in 1652," he said, "that 'le Mazarin' would some day be sitting beside you in your coach, you would not have believed it. And yet here he is—that Mazarin who did so much mischief."

Mademoiselle prudently replied, "I never thought he was so bad, and I always judged that things would come round in time."

She was obliged to accept not only "le Mazarin," but also "les Mazarinettes," and the new manners that he and they were imposing on the Court of France. She had had a foretaste of these at Saint-Cloud, where her old friend, the Princesse de Carignan, the lady of the sugarplums, had brought her daughter-in-law, Olympe Mancini, Comtesse de Soissons, to pay a visit of ceremony. Madame de Carignan arrived in a great fuss and full of compliments. As the day was very hot, the rooms crowded, and Madame de Soissons not very well, Mademoiselle invited her into a smaller room and left the other guests for a short time on purpose to entertain her. At first the young lady would not speak at all. Then she asked suddenly, "Why don't you wear your ruffles like other people?" Mademoiselle replied that they teased her. "If you think your arms look better so, you are mistaken," said the minx. She then grumbled a little about being bored by her mother-in-law, and after that, though Mademoiselle said many false but necessary things about herself and her uncle, she spoke not another word.

She and her sisters were the most important people at Court. Marie-Anne, the youngest, afterwards Duchesse de Bouillon and patroness of La Fontaine, was Queen Anne's

pet and the Cardinal's favourite playfellow. She was in the Queen's coach in the meadow at Sedan when Mademoiselle arrived there, and was the first person presented to her. Still more powerful was Marie Mancini, who at this time and for two or three years more had a fair chance of marrying Louis XIV. She was his first love and the preferred friend of his life, though she had reason enough in later years to put no faith in princes.

Under such influences as these, the greatest names in France being laid at the feet of a group of young Italian women who had neither high rank nor high breeding, it may be imagined that the atmosphere of the Court was changed, and that Mademoiselle, so characteristic a survival of "la vieille cour," was somewhat out of place there after her years of exile.

The King, in these young days of his, hated ceremony, and cared for nothing but sport, masquerading, and dancing. The plays of Quinault, a tragi-comic, sentimental bridge between Corneille and Racine, were the rather weak intellectual food of the moment. Great people had always, of course, been frivolous, vicious, and greedy, but somehow in a finer way. "Le vice s'encanaillait." Manners and taste had altered together, and temporarily at any rate for the worse. Madame de Rambouillet's "société d'élite" had ceased to exist, but the *préciosité* which Molière caricatured was flourishing under the wing of Mademoiselle de Scudéry. Her pe-dantic "Saturdays," crowded with foolish, underbred literary people, were a much duller and vulgarised copy of the aristocratic *Chambre Bleue* with its culture and grace.

Mademoiselle did not admire the change in her world, though, like all her old friends, she made the best of it. She at least held the comforting doctrine that the King could do no wrong.

Her Paris home for the rest of her life was the Luxembourg Palace. Her father, who seldom came to Court in his later years, gave her apartments there, and after his death she shared it with her stepmother and her half-sisters. In

these first years after her restoration to favour she found life amazingly gay, and her Memoirs are full of curious pictures of the amusements she shared with the King and his brother and the rest of the new society.

Paris crowded the streets, with shouts of welcome, when its favourite Princess drove through them once again. Other women might be queens of France; she was still Queen of Paris, and nothing but old age and her own foolishness could dethrone her. She had now a certain fame as one of the heroines of the Fronde, and there were plenty of people who found it in their hearts to regret those dashing days of street fighting, plunder, and varied adventure. The Parisians have never cared to be flattened down into good behaviour under a strictly civilised government.

The Luxembourg—often called the Palais d'Orléans—was crowded with visitors. Among them came Mademoiselle's old enemy, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon; a most formal visit hers, for she and the Duc de Richelieu had bitterly resented the decree that forced them to restore Champigny. The affectations of twenty years before had grown on Madame d'Aiguillon. She appeared in gloves of Spanish leather so overpoweringly scented that Mademoiselle, who was troubled with headaches, found it almost impossible to approach her.

"I drew back, holding my nose, and told her the smell would make me faint. . . . There were people silly enough to say that I would not speak to her, and that I did it on purpose to disoblige her. I am not capable of such foolish inventions; when I wish to quarrel with any one, I do it openly."

The story does not say whether Madame d'Aiguillon withdrew discreetly, like Condé when Madame objected to his Russia-leather boots, or sent her perfumed gloves to wait in the ante-room. It is not unlikely that she was one of the people who compared Mademoiselle to a *mousquetaire*.

Those were merry winters. The King, Monsieur, Mademoiselle, and all the younger lords and ladies of the Court, used to go out masked into the streets, hurrying from one



THE PALACE OF THE LUXEMBOURG
FROM AN OLD PRINT

ball to another, dancing everywhere, mystifying everybody and mystified themselves. They met bands of people dressed like pilgrims and like Capuchin monks, who caused great scandal by what was considered a serious insult to religion. One of the Capuchins showed a lovely arm and hand, and it came out afterwards that the sham monk was that Comtesse d'Olonne, already notorious, whom Mademoiselle had known in her youth as the beautiful Mademoiselle de la Loupe. All this made a fine text for the Lenten preachers.

There were ballets at the Louvre, and comedies without end, some *à machine*, others worthier precursors of Molière, such as *L'Astyanax*, by the Sieur de Salebray, who "collected very agreeably in this work," says a Gazette of the time, "the finest scenes of the Iliad." Molière himself, with his company, first appeared at the Louvre, under Monsieur's protection, in the autumn of 1658. Mademoiselle, it seems, was not at once attracted by him. But she was old-fashioned and conservative; probably, in spite of King and Court and all the new lights, she preferred the comedies of old Father Corneille. Certainly, as we know, she defended him stoutly when Racine began to march upon the scene.

The fair of Saint-Germain was a great resource for Mademoiselle. It was held between Saint-Sulpice and Saint-Germain-des-Prés, thus conveniently near the Luxembourg, and it lasted from Candlemas to the end of Lent.

"I love the fair," she writes, on one of the many occasions when little Monsieur was her escort. "I was very lucky: I won a number of cabinets and mirrors which I wanted for furnishing my rooms."

Lotteries were all the fashion, and Mademoiselle, who hated cards and banished them from her assemblies, did not at all disapprove of this form of gambling. Cardinal Mazarin covered a multitude of his sins by a famous lottery with which he amused the Court. The fame of his splendid liberality was spread all over Europe.

"M. le Cardinal did a gallant and extraordinary thing,"

writes Mademoiselle. "He invited their Majesties, the Queen of England, the Princess her daughter, and myself, to supper. We found his rooms very well arranged; the fish supper was magnificent. It was a Sunday in Lent; there was dancing after supper. He led the two Queens, the Princess and me, into a gallery quite full of everything imaginable in the way of jewels, trinkets, furniture, stuffs, all the pretty things that come from China, crystal chandeliers, mirrors, tables, cabinets of every shape, silver plate, perfumes, gloves, ribbons, fans. The gallery was as well filled as the booths in the fair; but there was no rubbish, everything being carefully chosen. He did not tell us what he meant to do; every one could see he had some design. . . . Two days later the mystery was solved, for he took the Queen and me into a cabinet where the lottery was drawn. There were no blanks, and he gave the whole to the ladies and gentlemen of the Court. The first prize was a diamond worth four thousand crowns, which luck gave to La Salle, a lieutenant in the royal gendarmes. I drew a diamond worth four thousand francs."

Mademoiselle was still better pleased with the Cardinal because he refused to admit her false friends, the Comtesses de Fiesque and de Frontenac, to this famous lottery. Being thus shut out, their spite and rage knew no bounds and were wreaked soon after on Mademoiselle. The King being dangerously ill, all Paris in mourning and anxiety, all music stopped, these ladies spread a report that Mademoiselle's fiddlers had been playing in the Place Royale. It was not the case, but in that world of gossip and slander Mademoiselle had some trouble in proving the innocence of her men.

Her mind was by no means entirely occupied with balls, fairs, lotteries, masquerades, and quarrels. It was about this time that she bought from Mademoiselle de Guise and the other guardians of the young Duc de Joyeuse the château and the great estates of Eu, where a good deal of her after-life was spent. The neglected condition of Eu gave full scope to Mademoiselle's talent for building and decorating,

laying out and improving. After she came into full possession, the restoration of the immense wilderness which had once been a splendid forest was an undertaking which needed a vast expenditure of thought, time, and money. Eu, with its Norman sternness, salt air and northerly winds, became more of a home to Mademoiselle in her later years than any other of her country-houses. Here she wrote the larger part of her admirable Memoirs. Here too she went through many painful and enraging scenes with the worthless M. de Lauzun.

CHAPTER IV

1658-1660

"The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things."

SOVEREIGN PRINCESS OF DOMBES—THE DUCHESSE DE MONTMOR-
ENCY—ROYAL VISITS TO CHAMBORD AND BLOIS—ROYAL JOURNEYS IN
THE SOUTH—PROCLAMATION OF PEACE AND RETURN OF CONDÉ—THE
DEATH OF GASTON D'ORLÉANS

MADemoisELLE was not only the first Princess of the blood royal in France; she was also an independent sovereign. Her principality of Dombes, on the left bank of the Saône between Dijon and Lyons, had owed no service to the Kings of France, except military aid in war, since the days of Philippe Auguste. Its people paid no taxes; it coined its own money, and was managed by a little parliament of its own, sitting at Trévoux, the capital. The Pays de Dombes was one of those curious instances of home rule under a feudal lord which were then scattered about Europe, to disappear one by one from the path of logical centralised government. It kept this partial independence till the year 1762.

Mademoiselle's officers seem to have ruled with a light hand, like those of her ancestors, who had possessed Dombes for centuries. She inherited the principality from her mother; but it was a cross-country journey of many days from Paris, and she never visited it till the year 1658, when she travelled into the East with the Court, on the way to a meeting with the royal House of Savoy. It was a delightful autumn journey, made mostly on horseback, for the season was fine and the roads were good. Mademoiselle was glad to be free of the formalities of the Louvre and Fontainebleau, though she

did not much enjoy the company of the Cardinal's nieces or the King's increasing flirtations with them.

It is curious to note that just at this time the death of the Prince de Conti's nine-days-old son saved the French Court from "the shame of wearing mourning for the destroyer of the English monarchy." Mademoiselle declares that only an express order from the King would have made her wear mourning for Cromwell, considering the respect she owed to her near relation, the Queen of England. Queen Anne very readily gave Mademoiselle leave to absent herself from the Louvre whenever the English ambassadors were expected there.

The Court lingered some days at Dijon, where the States of Burgundy were sitting, rather mournful at the enormous war taxes the King was trying to extort. M. Brulart, the President, seems to have found Mademoiselle the most sympathetic member of the royal party. "He said that if I had lived in the time of those who made the Salic law, or if they could have foreseen that France would possess a Princess such as I, they would never have made it, or at least it would have been abolished in my favour."

At Dijon, Mademoiselle's officers of the Pays de Dombes appeared to receive her orders, and lower down the river she travelled in full view of her possessions on the opposite bank. Her people were eagerly watching for her: quaint, prosperous peasants, the young girls in broad hats which delighted the liege lady. They came rowing across the river, lying in wait for her coach, crying, "Where is Madame?" and the King enjoyed pointing her out to them. "Long live the King and Madame!" shouted the good folk of Dombes.

Among the many solemn deputations who attended and harangued the King at Lyons, that from the Parliament of Dombes had the most magnificent air. Their Princess, as she often tells us, was fond of "*les choses d'honneur*." The sight of booted and travel-stained deputies from Orange and from Geneva did not suit her ideas of the becoming; and

at her earnest request, the King and the Cardinal received her magistrates as "sovereign judges," clothed in the red robes of their office. It was an additional pleasure to her that her deputies, not being the King's subjects, did not kneel in his presence. Mademoiselle would have made a fine constitutional Queen, to judge by her jealousy for the honour of "my parliament."

She had to assist at the ceremonial reception of her aunt Christine, Duchess of Savoy—Henry IV's second daughter, known as Madame Royale—who brought her son and daughters to Lyons with an object she failed to attain, the marriage of Princess Marguerite with Louis XIV. Mademoiselle did not care for her aunt, who made herself a laughing-stock at the French Court by disappointment too openly shown, but she rather liked the Duke of Savoy, and he was at one time proposed as a possible match for her. During these weeks at Lyons she injured her own dignity a little by allowing Monsieur to drag her about, masked and uninvited, to various entertainments in the city, where the society, as Queen Anne justly thought, was too young, too wild, and too boisterous for a princess of her age, whose remarkable height and air made her always conspicuous. But the tomboy element in Mademoiselle took long in dying.

As soon as the Savoyard guests were gone and Christmas was over, she made her desired expedition to her own little sovereignty. Heavy rains had been followed by a slight frost, and the sun was shining with a brightness of spring. The Saône had overflowed its banks, so that Mademoiselle's coach was obliged to turn inland; but she mounted her horse and rode over the high ground near the river. At Vimy she hunted the hare with the archiepiscopal hounds. The Archbishop of Lyons, a sporting prelate, had a beautiful house there, with a terraced garden overlooking the river. As Mademoiselle rode, she had a view of wide-spreading wheat-fields, already, she declares, green as meadows in spring, and of distant hills dotted over with the cheerful country-houses of the citizens of Lyons.

Mademoiselle was pleased with the good looks and the prosperity of her subjects. "Nearly all the women are pretty," she says, "and they have the finest teeth in the world . . . the peasants are well dressed. There are no beggars to be seen. They have never paid any taxes, and perhaps it would be better if they did. For they are lazy, caring neither for work nor trade; which would be easy for them, being near the river and large towns. They eat meat four times a day."

If Mademoiselle was rightly informed on this point, the people of Dombes were very much better off, not only than the rest of France in those days, but also than the majority of French peasants a century after the Revolution. There are many parts of France now where soup, cabbage, and bread, with an occasional scrap of bacon, and perhaps a little meat on Sunday, is the ordinary food of the people.

Mademoiselle does not say whether she proceeded to lay taxes on these fortunate vassals of hers. Probably not, as this part of her Memoirs was not written till some time later. She expected, of course, to draw a revenue from Dombes; but this was done in other ways; for instance, by the sale of dignities and *charges* connected with the Parliament. When the liege lord or lady wanted money, a new *charge* was created and sold. Gaston d'Orléans, as his daughter's guardian, had thus raised a good deal. On this occasion Mademoiselle created a president, several councillors and other officers, and received more than enough money to pay the expenses of her journey with the Court.

She made a triumphal entry into her little capital. The municipal officers—still called Consuls, the tradition of Rome lingering at Trévoux, the ancient Triviae—knelt at the gate to present their keys. The church bells jangled; the local militia fired off their guns; the Dean preached and the choir sang a *Te Deum*. Mademoiselle had no château at Trévoux, for "Messieurs de Montpensier" never lived there. The ruined castle above the town was even then nothing but a relic of much earlier centuries. She had bought a

house with terrace and fountain, and there she spent two merry days. She dined in public, "to show myself to my subjects." She received presents of sweet lemons and muscat wine. The Parliament addressed her on their knees, and she addressed them in return, recommending her people to their care. After these solemnities she had a good deal of gay talk with the gentlemen who waited on her, and narrowly escaped being burnt to death, for a beam under the hearth caught fire and the smell of it reached her only just in time. Perhaps the old house was not accustomed to such fires as were lighted in those December days for Mademoiselle.

She ended her visit to Dombes by liberating all prisoners, even villains who had given themselves up, after committing unpardonable crimes, on this good chance of coming off scot-free. They, however, were sent out of the little country and forbidden to return. "This is the custom," she says, "wherever the King goes ; that is, in places he visits for the first time." She performed her own duty to the King by causing him to be prayed for in the churches of Dombes : a privilege which belonged to her only.

The King and all the younger ladies went riding back to Paris along the frozen roads, while the Queen, Mademoiselle, and the rest of the Court were glad to keep to their coaches. It was all very well to be hardy, and the King must of course have his own way. All his life Louis XIV's fellow-travellers had to make up their minds to hardship, for His Majesty was in some ways Spartan. But Mademoiselle pitied those young women. "They were very cold, though they had fur jackets. They had black velvet caps with feathers. But I think their ears were pinched in spite of that ; for in the open country the wind blows through one's curls."

Yet it must have been a pretty cavalcade, and a merry one too.

The whole Court broke its journey at Moulins, and there visited one of the tragic figures of the century, a monument of wars and revolts long before the Fronde. After twenty-

six years of semi-captivity, the widowed Duchesse de Montmorency had taken the veil in the Convent of the Filles de Sainte-Marie, which she had founded with the fortune that remained to her. There, in her cell, breathless from weakness and bowed with grief and premature age, the Roman beauty of a former generation received the young French Court. Queen Anne was deeply touched by the interview. She has the credit of having done her best to save the Duc de Montmorency, but Richelieu and Louis XIII were implacable.

The young men of the party were pleasant enough with their idle remarks.

"You would never have expected, Madame," said the King, "to see so many men in your little room. I am sure every one of us ought to be the better for entering it!"

The little dandy Monsieur was more picturesque, less simple, less really polished, but he showed appreciation of the romantic tragedy ending here.

"Is it possible that ten feet of space should be now the habitation of Madame de Montmorency?"

The young courtiers who crowded the doorway were amazed at the very slight apparent impression made on "Sister Marie-Henriette" by her splendid visitors. They thought she was in a kind of religious trance—"dans un ravissement"—so absent-minded did she seem, so unconscious of the great honour conferred upon her.

In truth only one person besides the Queen succeeded in breaking the ice of Madame de Montmorency's long silence. She must have divined real sympathy, besides a lively curiosity, in Mademoiselle, so eager to talk of the ever-present past, and to atone, if she could, for the cowardly weakness which had made her father partly the cause of Henry de Montmorency's death.

The Duchess, says Mademoiselle, "*parla fort de feu M. de Montmorency, avec une tendresse inimaginable.*" She told Mademoiselle how she had loved her young husband with unequalled passion, even going so far as to love other

women whom he loved—and they were many. “Very extraordinary, to my fancy!” says Mademoiselle. Perhaps “Sylvie’s” romantic memory, brooding so long in solitude, may have deceived her a little here. Or else she was really superhuman. She lingered on the pretty details of that married life which ended so soon, describing what pains she took to provide the Duke with magnificent suits for the balls to which he often went alone, for she was even then too serious-minded to care for Court festivities. She described how she watched from her window for the first glimpse of him returning home, with other pathetic touches which delighted and edified Mademoiselle.

As far as one knows, she never saw the Duchess again. Madame de Montmorency became Superior of her convent, and ended her sorrowful life in 1666, the year of the death of Anne of Austria.

There is a certain pathos attaching to the last years of Gaston d’Orléans, now so long *rangé* and respectably buried at Blois with his tiresome wife and foolish little girls. It was necessary for him to show himself sometimes at Court, but he detested these occasions, and always made his stay as short as possible. He was treated with little respect or ceremony; his daughter resented this for him, in spite of her own grievances. Some of her remarks show the almighty young tyrant, Louis XIV, in a most unamiable and discourteous light. In the evening walks at Fontainebleau, she says, the King hardly ever put on his hat; it was therefore impossible for her father to wear his without a permission which was not given for a long time. Poor Gaston, whose health was far from good, dreaded the evening chills and mists. His only means of protecting his bare head was to lay his gloves upon it, a broad hint which ordinary kindness might have taken. But Louis, in truth, never forgave the leaders of the Fronde. He was ingenious in his ways of making them feel it, giving his own Most Christian Majesty the trouble to prove once more

How very small the very great are !

No wonder that in the intervals of attending on his royal nephew Gaston poured out his injured mind to his daughter in such words as these: "I am terribly weary of being here; I am desperately impatient to go home. The world bores me; I am no longer fit for it. If I stayed here long, I should be ill with the fatigue of it all."

As Mademoiselle herself says, history tells so much of the royal journey to the South in 1659, the Peace of the Pyrenees, the marriage of Louis XIV and the Infanta, that private memoirs may be content with personal details not generally known. She found a good deal of interest and amusement, boredom and annoyance, in this year-long absence from her familiar world. She enjoyed as much independence as anybody could find in the wake of the young King, already, with a certain pleasant stateliness, the most *exigeant* of monarchs and of men.

Cardinal Mazarin travelled in advance of the Court, a messenger of peace, on his way to end the long war between France and Spain. The great train of the Court—this time not including Mademoiselle Mancini—leaving Fontainebleau at the end of July, swept down upon Chambord, where it was rather dismally received by the Duke and Duchess of Orléans. According to lingering custom—to be altered, a few years later, by Louis XIV—the hosts offered nothing at Chambord but the palace itself. Their servants were sent to Blois to make room. The royal guests entertained Monsieur at supper, and Mademoiselle, having brought her own household, did the honours of Chambord to all the ladies who had accompanied the Queen.

Madame was ill, and there were "no walks at Chambord"; therefore no means of amusing the Queen, who liked pacing gardens and terraces, and did not care to venture forth into the surrounding woods. The King went out shooting, and killed fourteen of his uncle's much loved and carefully preserved pheasants. Poor Gaston could not hide his disgust, which amused Louis excessively.

The next day the Court dined at Blois, a feast for which

immense preparations had been made. It had also been hoped that the charm of Mademoiselle d'Orléans, a pretty little girl of fourteen, known in her own family as "the little Queen," might even turn the King from the idea of marriage with his other unknown cousin, the Infanta. But alas for summer weather and an undrained century, Princess Marguerite's lovely complexion and slim throat were all reddened and swollen by gnat-bites. She was supposed, like her mother, to be a beautiful dancer. She and her sisters were ordered to dance before the Queen. But this too was a failure; stupefied by disappointment, she danced very badly. And the little chattering sister who was her father's delight, of whose cleverness he had boasted to all the world, would not open her lips to speak.

The banquet too was a terrible failure. The cookery was old-fashioned; Monsieur's servants had lost touch with the great world; and so, though the dinner was magnificent, it was not thought good, and their Majesties hardly touched it.

"All the ladies of the Court of Blois, who were there in great numbers, were dressed like the dinner, not *à la mode*. I never saw the Queen and the King in such a hurry to be gone. It did not look polite; but I think my father felt the same on his part and was very glad to be rid of us."

Mademoiselle's last interview with her unsatisfactory father had a pathetic touch. Writing many years later, she keeps a vivid impression of this last time they met.

"The morning we left Chambord he came and woke me at four o'clock. He sat on my bed and said to me, 'I think you will not be angry with me for waking you, as there will be no time to see you later. You are going on a great and lengthy journey; for whatever they may say, peace is not made so easily, and it may not be made at all; thus your travels may be longer than they think. I am old, worn out; I may die during your absence. If I die, I recommend your sisters to you. I know you do not love Madame; she might have behaved better to you. Her children are not to blame; for my sake, take care of them.' He embraced me

three or four times. I responded tenderly, for I have a kind heart. . . . We parted affectionately, and I fell asleep again. . . . If I did not remember all this vividly, I should believe it was a dream, considering all that had passed in former years."

When the royal coaches drove away, Mademoiselle had the experience of hearing her father, her stepmother, her sisters, the poor hospitality of Blois, and all the small events of the visit, thoroughly criticised and heartily laughed at. She knew her world too well to be surprised. There is nothing new, or old, under the sun.

Gaston proved himself a true prophet both as to the length of his daughter's travels and as to his own destiny. The Court journeyed on by slow stages to Bordeaux, and lingered there from August to October, while Mazarin, at St.-Jean-de-Luz, was treating of peace with Don Luis de Haro. In the meanwhile the Maréchal de Gramont, with a brilliant suite—one of whom was the young Comte de Charny, summoned by Mademoiselle from his idle regiment in Flanders—was sent to Madrid as Ambassador Extraordinary to ask the Infanta's hand for Louis XIV.

During these first weeks of delay the Court amused itself as best it could in the provincial city. The Queen visited convents; the King reviewed his guards. The evenings were spent at high play, courtiers winning and losing many thousand crowns. Mademoiselle, who did not inherit her father's gambling instincts, kept away from the card-tables as much as possible. It is only fair, indeed, to say that she and Mademoiselle de Vandy, with Madame de Montausier, who followed the Court to Bordeaux (her husband being Governor of Angoulême and Saintonge), kept alive a bright little flame of interest in literary and intelligent subjects. Julie was still herself; worldly enough in her own way, but impatient of courtly follies and frivolous stupidity. Her presence had the perfume of that famous *salon* which lifted French society out of barbarism, and the influence of which was never equalled by its affected, degenerate successors.

Julie
de
Pauline

She and Mademoiselle met as old acquaintances, and evidently liked each other. The meeting resulted in Mademoiselle's dashing off that little *jeu d'esprit* which will always be valuable as a recollection at first hand of Madame de Rambouillet and the *Chambre Bleue*.

It seems that Madame de Montausier, like other friends of Mademoiselle, was sorry for her domestic troubles, and in trying to reconcile Mademoiselle de Vandy with "les comtesses," addressed her by Mademoiselle de Scudéry's name, saying, "You are very proud, Princess of Paphlagonia!" On which Mademoiselle remarked, "The Princess of Paphlagonia is at war with Queen Gilette"—a nickname given in society to Madame de Fiesque—and added, "When peace is signed between France and Spain, you will make peace between these crowned heads."

The lively sketch which was the result of this talk was written in three evenings at Bordeaux—five or six hours' work—and pleased Madame de Montausier. She also liked another gay "bagatelle," *La Relation de l'Île invisible*, which Mademoiselle had written during her visit to Dombes for a certain Chevalier de Messimieux, who amused her by begging for the government of an island which, like the kingdom of Gaston's youth, only existed in fancy. Both these clever trifles were admired at Bordeaux, and Madame de Pontac (*née* de Thou) Mademoiselle's cousin and hostess, insisted on having *The Invisible Island* printed in a little book, to be read by a small privileged public.

The Court moved on from Bordeaux to Toulouse, taking a week on the journey. It was to Toulouse, early in November, that Cardinal Mazarin brought the welcome news of peace with Spain. The war had lasted twenty-five years. The Treaty of the Pyrenees was the crowning point of his own and Richelieu's policy. It established France as protector of the balance of power in Europe.

The King's marriage with the Infanta was now a settled thing. But Spaniards in those days moved slowly, and King Philip IV did not find it accordant with his dignity to bring

his daughter to the frontier till late in the following spring. The final ceremony, indeed, did not take place till June, when the French Court was heartily tired of waiting. At the first prospect of such delay it was proposed to return to Paris for the winter, but finally the King and Queen made up their minds to travel about in the South, and these winter excursions were pleasant enough, though "un froid enragé, une gelée horrible," alternated with the heat of a July sun on short January days.

After Christmas, spent at Toulouse, Mademoiselle accompanied the Court to Montpellier and then to Nîmes. From Nîmes to Arles she took a route of her own by Avignon, being curious to see the old town of the Popes, and also, with her strong dislike of water, dreading the passage of the Rhône from Beaucaire to Tarascon. She walked over the lowest bridge of the Pont du Gard, "a great work of the Romans . . . which cannot be understood without being seen." It was a serious matter to convey her three clumsy coaches across the ancient bridge, and only one of her coachmen was clever enough to manage it.

She arrived by moonlight "sur le pont d'Avignon," and was carried over in a chair, very much alarmed by the height, narrowness, and ruinous condition of the bridge, as well as by the rapid rushing of the wide Rhône. She was also exceedingly angry, the Vice-Legate and other great persons having turned out with the garrison and the whole population, for once against her wish, to receive her honourably. Torches, crowds, cannon, compliments and harangues. Mademoiselle, who had pictured herself in freedom and privacy, would answer nothing but "Je ne suis pas moi; je suis inconnue. Je veux être inconnue." The bridge safely crossed, she escaped into a house; but the Vice-Legate, a strong and zealous man, broke open the door with his reverend fist and the compliments began again. She had to be royal and civil in spite of herself, to please the folk of Avignon. They caracoled round her with such enthusiasm and energy that a certain chevalier, commanding a troop of

cavalry "seldom mounted," managed to tumble horse and all into a cellar under the street. Mademoiselle recovered her spirits, her ladies laughed, and all went merrily.

She spent a day in seeing the sights of Avignon. She describes the palace of the Popes as a shabby old house with fine rooms and a beautiful view. The Vice-Legate had laid out his pedigree for her instruction; she readily divined his thoughts, and paid him compliments on his connection with herself through the House of Joyeuse. She visited the walls of the town and various convents, churches, and chapels. She even looked into the Jews' synagogue and heard them singing. "*Jamais je n'ai vu un si vilain lieu ni de si vilaines gens.*"

Mademoiselle revisited Avignon in the spring, when the Court, still waiting impatiently on the King of Spain's pleasure, spent Holy Week there. On this first occasion she was forced, against her will, to rejoin the King and Queen by a voyage down the Rhône, a ferry she had meant to cross being out of order. The Vice-Legate amiably lent her a boat. The South was in an unkind mood; there had been so great a frost that the Rhône was frozen over; a regiment of Guards had crossed on the ice from Tarascon to Beaucaire, and although there had been a thaw, the river was still arctic enough to be more dangerous than usual.

"Necessity conquered fear," says Mademoiselle. "On embarking, I prayed to God from the bottom of my heart; I recommended myself to Him, and began my voyage. It was thawing, but the frost had been very hard; there were rocks of ice of frightful size in the Rhône. . . . The weather was beautiful, the country much to be admired. I was so completely reassured that I fell asleep in the boat; so that the voyage to Arles seemed to me very short."

She notes rather scornfully that every one at Court had the same parrot cry, "What! You came by water! What! You were not frightened!" At least her adventure gave them all something to talk about for one evening; useless, lively chatter; making much of nothing, as the way of the Court is.

On the whole, thorough Parisian as she was, Mademoiselle did not care very much for the climate, the landscape, or the products of the South. The far-famed mutton of the Crau did not seem to her superior to the mutton of Beauvais. She had to be contented with chicken broth instead of the veal broth she loved. She was disappointed in the neighbourhood of Marseilles, visited by the Court in early spring : an ugly country with ugly olive trees ; no cultivation, no fruit, no salads, no good wine except *liqueurs*. Oranges, lemons, grenadines, to be sure, but not growing along the roadsides, as she had expected. As to beauty, "I saw nothing, to my fancy, to be compared to the environs of Paris." The galley-slaves at Marseilles, half naked and black with the sun, chained to their oars as they rowed the Court about in painted and gilded vessels, filled Mademoiselle with horror and pity and made her think of hell. And she found no pleasure in an excursion with the King to the Château d'If, during which she and the whole party were soaked by an enormous wave. Neither did she at all enjoy later journeys in that stormy spring, the fording of flooded rivers, the real danger of being swept away by their terrible rapidity. One of her coaches was indeed nearly lost, with her dogs and her jewellery, not to mention the women in charge, who had the good sense to hurry a rescue by shouting, "Mademoiselle's jewels are here !"

Something of a wilderness as to nature ; rather savage, immoral, and frivolous ; a state of civilisation uniting the dangers and superstitions of the Middle Ages with the manners and amusements of Spain ; such, to judge by many vivid touches in Mademoiselle's story, was her impression of the beautiful land of poets, Provence.

She found the dances tiresome and the music barbaric ; she saw no fun in a fight between an ass and a bear, provided at Perpignan as a diversion for their Majesties. She was really shocked by the customs and morals of some of the nuns in the convents she visited. "They are *très coquettes*," she says ; "they wear wimples of pleated cambric,

put on rouge, are even painted, and boast of having lovers." One of these ladies introduced herself to Mademoiselle as the mistress of M. de Saint-Aunais, with whom she was acquainted, and claimed her favour on that account. "I was very much frightened. . . . I did not know what to say to her."

The little incident shows an enormous stride in public opinion since the old days of unreformed convents, of the Abbesses of Yères and Avenay. The Carmelites and Port Royal had at least introduced a higher standard of life for persons professedly "religious."

Mentioning the fountain of Vaucluse, which she does not appear, however, to have taken the trouble to visit, Mademoiselle gives her point of view as to foreign literature. One cannot call it insular, of course, and yet it seems distinctly English in character; English, that is, of a generation now past or passing away. After a few words about the "famous Italian poet, Petrarch," she adds, "As I do not know Italian well enough to have read the poets, I only know them by hearsay. As I have always thought a great deal of my own country, I have applied myself little to foreign languages. There are so many good and beautiful books in our own language, that I can content myself without seeking beyond it."

On the 2nd of February, 1660, the Court being at Aix, a grand *Te Deum* was sung in the cathedral and peace was proclaimed. In the midst of the general rejoicing Mademoiselle was troubled, she did not know why. She afterwards took it for a presentiment; but there was enough, at the moment, to give matter for serious thought even to a Princess "unaccustomed to reflection," as Madame de Motteville described her.

Many memories of past days came back with the Prince de Condé, who presented himself at Aix a few days before the proclamation, to make his submission and be reconciled with the King. His "accommodement" had been one of the chief points insisted on with Mazarin by the Spanish plenipo-

tentiary. There are different accounts of his reception, and of the amount of coldness young Louis thought necessary as a lesson to the great rebel, now at his feet. Mademoiselle was not present at the first interview. Her story shows us Condé entirely at his ease, "as if he had never stirred from the Court." She says that he talked openly of the wars of the Fronde, and that he and she laughed together at all their past "sottises," the King listening, and enjoying their jokes. This was all very well. But Condé, it seems, understood his young master, and knew that his own proud day was definitely over. "During the rest of his life Louis XIV had no subject more faithful, no courtier more devoted, than this former chief of the Fronde."

It was on the 2nd of February, while the joy-bells were ringing in the Peace of the Pyrenees and the noontide of his nephew's reign, that Gaston d'Orléans died at Blois. His faults were known to all the world, and especially to Mademoiselle; even since their last parting she had had a sharp experience of his wrong-headed injustice. Still there must have been something attractive in the man. He kept his daughter's affection in spite of all his sins against her; and in general society he did not outlive the character for kindness and good-nature which had always saved his popularity. "Il était bon," the world said of him. Not *good*, but *kind*; though indeed many of his friends had found the kindness only skin-deep.

Madame de Motteville, sincere if courtly, has a charitable word to say of the dead Prince, known to her for many years. In any case, she thinks, the nation owed honour and regret to a son of the great Henry. But she feels it right to dwell on his experience of the vanity of earthly glory, on his fall from political power into a dismal exile, on the piety and repentance of his later life, on the patient firmness with which, like his brother Louis, he faced suffering and death.

One need hardly believe all the stories that reached Mademoiselle of that tragic death-bed at Blois. Monsieur's secretaries shrewdly guessed that Mademoiselle, as a future

patroness, would be more valuable than Madame, and they did their best, by collecting and piling on miserable details, to widen the breach between these two. The Duchess was a victim to "vapours" and a slave to regular meals. For years her health had been her one preoccupation. But it is scarcely possible that she would have gone to dinner while her dying husband was receiving the last sacraments. However, the truth was bad enough. Madame Marguerite's heartless behaviour quite justified the Queen's and Mademoiselle's dislike.

The Abbé de Rancé, Monsieur's chaplain, already on his way from the life of a vicious courtier to that of a reformer and a saint, watched over him as long as he lived; but afterwards there were no lights, no fire, no linen, none of the usual necessities or proper ceremonies. The priests fled from the bitter cold of the room. Madame and her daughters drove off to Paris long before etiquette allowed them to move. The poor corpse of *feu* Monsieur was conveyed to Saint-Denis with a small escort, no pomp, no expenditure, and thus meanly he was laid to rest with his royal ancestors.

"If I had been there, all would have been done differently!" cries Mademoiselle. She mourned her father sincerely, though her grief took the form of a display which seemed almost as absurd as the long trained cloak assumed by the young Monsieur, the heir to Gaston's *apanage*, the "furieux manteau" which amused Louis XIV. Mademoiselle furnished her rooms in grey and put her whole household into mourning, down to the kitchen-boys, the horses, and the pack-mules. "There never was anything so fine as the march of all this grand mourning equipage. It had a truly great and very magnificent air." It satisfied, at least, her idea of what was becoming, and made some amends, she thought, for the neglect and disrespect shown by others.

Gaston d'Orleans left certain special treasures to his nephew, the King; his collection of coins and medals, his

books of birds, painted in miniature ; his rare flowers, plants, and shells. To Mademoiselle he seems to have left nothing, except her liberty. She made instant use of this by recalling her faithful servant Préfontaine, of whom his fatherly tyranny had deprived her.

CHAPTER V

1660-1664

"I sat beside them sole princess in my exalted place,
My ladies and my gentlemen stood by me on the dais :
A mirror showed me I look old and haggard in the face."

MADemoisELLE BEGINS TO REFLECT—THE SPANISH MARRIAGE—
LIFE AT THE LUXEMBOURG—MADemoisELLE'S PORTRAIT GALLERY—
THE KING OF PORTUGAL—A SECOND EXILE

LONG before the end of these peregrinations in the South, Mademoiselle was becoming bored and weary. She had indeed reached her half-way house of life ; she felt herself left a little behind by the gay young Court with its new fashions and amusements; the arrangement of a possible marriage for her no longer interested the world much ; she was rather annoyed by the talk of various good matches for her younger sisters, poor and pretty and ill-brought-up as they were. She cared no longer for dancing, which had been her passion. Even the beloved *comédie* lost its charm when presented in a Spanish dress at St.-Jean-de-Luz, where the Court spent the month of May, the King of Spain having arrived at San Sebastian, and the Conference of the Île des Faisans being in full swing.

With all Mademoiselle's conviction of the superiority of her own country and her own language, she was annoyed at her ignorance of Spanish, which placed her now at a decided disadvantage. It was not entirely for this reason, however, that she turned away in disgust from the Spanish plays at St.-Jean-de-Luz. They were put on the stage in a way that offended her taste. "They danced between the acts," she says; ". . . they dressed up like hermits, like monks; they acted funerals and marriages; they profaned the mysteries

of religion ; and many persons were scandalised." Mademoiselle's religious ideas were of the north ; less familiar and natural, more reverent, than those of Italy or Spain. Every one who knows the churches of Naples, Seville, and Paris, knows also that such a difference exists to this day.

Queen Anne, the Spaniard, was not shocked ; she attended these plays every day, in the intervals of church services and visits to Cardinal Mazarin, in bed with an attack of gout. Mademoiselle also visited His Eminence, with whom she was now on good terms ; he was almost an old friend among the crowd of upstart new-comers at Court.

Suddenly Mademoiselle gives us a little vignette of herself. She was standing with Madame de Motteville in the Cardinal's window while he and the Queen talked. Looking out on the Bidassoa and the distant Pyrenees, these two ladies began to talk of the delights of solitude. "What a happy life one might lead in a desert ; how embarrassing and fatiguing the life at Court, with all the injustice of changing fortune ; how few are contented and how many complain of their lot. We had a fine field for moralising, especially as we added in a little Christianity."

The Queen was ready to go, and the conversation ended, but Mademoiselle's reflections had only begun. Walking afterwards by the sea, she thought out a whole plan of solitary life for those who might retire from the Court of their own free will. In that peaceful desert there were to be no marriages and no flirtations. Poor Princess ! it was a pity that she could not have carried some such theories into action.

She now began the correspondence with Madame de Motteville on the ideal life which amused and edified them both for many months. Some of the letters made their way into print, and they earned a word of praise from Sainte-Beuve, whose judgment of Mademoiselle is not always of the fairest. He treats the whole matter, of course, as the idle dream it was, but he allows Mademoiselle "un esprit romanesque assez fin et distingué, élevé même par moments." She

considered her own letters very trifling stuff as compared with those of Madame de Motteville, who wrote in a learned and impressive style, with quotations from Italian and Spanish literature, from poets, historians, the Fathers, and Holy Scripture. "Enfin ce sont force choses ramassées," says Mademoiselle with admiration, unconscious that critics might think an ounce of originality worth a pound of pedantry.

The detailed story of the marriage with its curious ceremonies belongs rather to the personal history of Louis XIV than to that of Mademoiselle. She was only one, though probably the most characteristic, among the great ladies who took part in the reception of the young Queen on French soil. But her lively curiosity and impatience would not allow her to wait at St.-Jean-de-Luz while the Spanish Court was at Fuentarabia. She dragged permission from the King and the Cardinal to attend the first grand ceremony incognito.

This was not thought a dignified proceeding on the part of French Royalties, no grandee of Spain having crossed the frontier, and young Monsieur was bitterly disappointed at being forbidden to go with his cousin. He did his very best, like the dog-in-the-manger he was, to stop her going. But she reasoned successfully with the Cardinal: "I am of no consequence, I inherit nothing; I ought not to be unlucky in everything. As girls are nobody in France, at least let them see what they wish to see!"

Crowds of French people, unhindered by royal etiquette, had crossed the river before Mademoiselle, and she and her party had some difficulty in finding coaches to carry them from the landing-place to the town-gate. The guards saluted politely. Cardinal Mazarin had informed Don Luis de Haro of Her Royal Highness's intention, so that she was not really unknown. But she had done her best to disguise herself. She was plainly dressed in black, and the heavy rain of the morning had spoilt her curls. "I looked like a foreigner; fair hair quite flat is not very ornamental."



MARIE THÉRÈSE OF AUSTRIA, QUEEN OF FRANCE

AFTER A PORTRAIT BY BEAUBRUN

Inside the church she found a number of French people near the altar, and "took the liberty to order them about," forgetting her incognito. This evident importance made some one offer her a chair, which she refused, and became an ordinary spectator of the ceremony.

It consisted of low Mass, followed by the reading of the papal dispensation and the Infanta's formal marriage, without ring or joining of hands, to Don Luis de Haro as proxy for the King of France. The church was full of bishops and clergy and Spanish grandees, but most of the spectators were French. Mademoiselle was well amused by watching the King of Spain and his daughter, who also stared hard at her. She was impressed by the King's slow and dignified movements, by the glorious table diamond, "the Mirror of Portugal," with which his hat was caught up, and the pear-shaped pearl, "the Pilgrim," depending from it. She liked his face, good and worn. She liked the Infanta's looks too, and she noticed—with Madame de Motteville, also present—her resemblance to her aunt, Anne of Austria. The portraits show it a little; but Marie-Thérèse, with her drooping eyelids and heavy cheeks and amiable but stupid expression, never had a touch of her aunt's peculiar charm. Still, she was a fair, blue-eyed girl, with a beauty of youth and goodness which triumphed over the hideous dress of her nation. Madame de Motteville was shocked by the uncovered shoulders of the Spanish ladies, their badly cut gowns with the enormous hoops, called "guardinfante." "It seemed," she says, "as if several barrel-hoops were sewn inside their petticoats, except that these are round, and the *guardinfante* was a little flattened behind and before, standing out at the sides. When they walked, this machine jogged up and down, and had a very ugly effect."

Madame de Motteville, being able to talk Spanish, had the honour to exchange a few words with her new Queen, and Mademoiselle joined her and other French ladies in the room where Marie Thérèse was dining. She acknowledged Mademoiselle's courtesy with most amiable smiles. After dinner,

rising from table, she said, "I must embrace that unknown lady," and would not allow Mademoiselle to kiss her hand. Later on they had an interview and some familiar talk. Mademoiselle was charmed with the girl, and hurried back to St.-Jean-de-Luz to report her delightful adventures. King, Queen, and Cardinal were interested and enchanted. "You have excellent taste," they said, with many other kind expressions.

The further ceremonies were not quite so pleasant. Mademoiselle was extremely angry with some of the arrangements as to precedence and train-bearing at the final conference on the Île des Faisans and the French marriage. She had a victorious skirmish with the Princess Palatine, who presumed to appear in a royal train. She was furious that her two young sisters, who had been sent from Paris, were without Dukes to carry their trains. Finally she gave up her own Duke, accepting the service of the Cardinal's nephew, Philippe Mancini, and the other Orléans Princesses were accommodated with a Count and a Marquis.

The King's regiments of Guards, French and Swiss, lined the road on each side of a raised artificial causeway, along which the royal procession passed to the church. The sight of these soldiers was nothing new to Mademoiselle; but she had a reason for mentioning two companies of gentlemen-at-arms, called "les becs-de-corbin" from the shape of their halberds, who were only drawn up on the greatest occasions, and whom she had never seen before, no doubt owing to her absence from Louis XIV's coronation. These companies dated from Louis XI and Charles VIII, and their command was hereditary in two great families, those of Lauzun and Crevant.

It was perhaps the first time that Mademoiselle took special notice of the keen little Gascon soldier and courtier, Antonin Nompar de Caumont, then known as Comte de Puyguilhem (pronounced *Péguilin*) afterwards as Comte de Lauzun, who was to be the curse of her later life. In 1660, and for years afterwards, the notion of marrying one of her

cousin's subjects would have been dismissed with scorn. But even then, it seems, she noticed the fiery Gascon with approval. There was some difficulty as to precedence with the Marquis d'Humières, commanding the other company of becs-de-corbin. Lauzun, whose company was of older date, carried his point "d'une grande hauteur." Mademoiselle, writing down these recollections while the unhappy man lay shut up for her sake in the fortress of Pignerol, observes that he always had the grand air in everything.

She travelled back with the Court to Fontainebleau, enjoying an earthquake in the Landes by the way. The pleasure of her return to Paris, after a year's absence, was much spoiled by disagreeable scenes with Madame, who had established herself and her daughters in the best apartments at the Luxembourg, occupied by Mademoiselle since her return from exile.

The matter was arranged, and the two separate households inhabited the palace till Madame's death in 1672. She was a dismal neighbour, unpopular and melancholy, more and more subject to "vapours" as the years rolled on. She and Mademoiselle were never at all in sympathy, and saw as little as possible of each other, but her three girls were constantly with their half-sister till they married. Marguerite, the eldest, Mademoiselle d'Orléans, a wild girl for whom Mademoiselle had some real affection, though she worried her a good deal, married the Grand Duke of Tuscany and was one of the eccentric characters of the second half of the century. Élisabeth, Mademoiselle d'Alençon, the least attractive of the family, remained with her mother till she was twenty-one, and was then married in a great hurry to Louis-Joseph, Duc de Guise, nephew and successor of Mademoiselle's hero-uncle, a delicate boy of seventeen, entirely under the dominion of his powerful aunt, Mademoiselle de Guise. Françoise, Mademoiselle de Valois, her father's pet, was married at fifteen to the Duke of Savoy, and died a year later.

At the Luxembourg, during most of the ten years that followed the King's marriage, Mademoiselle's life was cheer-

ful and agreeable. In the summer she usually visited her favourite Forges, then proceeding to one or another of her estates, and managing their complicated affairs with keen good sense. But in her Paris winters she was the centre of a society none the less pleasant because its tone of mind and taste was that of an older day. "Her salon," says Madame Arvède Barine, "became the first in Paris, the most interesting and the most *recherché*." In the midst of such a society she almost forgot the passage of years; a new kind of position, owing to her own talents and character, lessened the pain of a dwindling personal importance at Court and in the politics of Europe.

During the first year or two Mademoiselle's salon was made extremely gay by the presence of the Orléans Princesses and the girls and boys who gathered round them, and who found Madame, with her dulness, her prejudices, and her hatred of noise, a terrible wet blanket on their enjoyment. Among the young girls of this company was Louise de la Vallière, a gentle, lovely child of fifteen. In consequence of her mother's second marriage with M. de Saint-Remy, a gentleman in the service of Gaston d'Orléans, she had been brought up at Blois with his children.

A very frequent guest at the Luxembourg was François Timoléon de Choisy, the idolised youngest son of Mademoiselle's clever and scheming acquaintance, Madame de Choisy, and the pet playfellow of young Monsieur. He was now a lad of about seventeen, a budding *abbé*, frivolous, effeminate, and clever. His foolish mother had strengthened his natural tendencies by constantly dressing him as a girl, to make him a fitter companion for the weak little Prince, brought up by selfish political caution in the same unworthy way. The Abbé's father, who unluckily died in his childhood, had been Chancellor to Gaston d'Orléans, and he was thus a privileged person at the Luxembourg. We owe to his lively Memoirs some details of the society there in the years before marriage and death had carried away the two brightest of the young Princesses, and before Mademoiselle's own agree-

able life had been broken in upon by a new political tyranny.

Mademoiselle says: "Since my sisters were young, and fond of jumping and dancing, the evenings when there was no ballet or acting at the Louvre they danced to my violins. The ball was held in a room as far as possible from that of Madame."

The Abbé de Choisy says: "We played games every day at the Luxembourg: blind's-man's buff, hide-and-seek; no cards, it was not the fashion there, but we laughed a hundred times as much; there were violins, but we generally stopped them and danced to singing:" an enchanting experience, as everyone who ever had it will confess.

The Abbé speaks disrespectfully of Mademoiselle, under whose wing he could enjoy himself without the risk of losing his money; more than could be said of the Court of the Louvre. He calls her "la vieille," and declares that she would not allow her sister Marguerite to marry Prince Charles of Lorraine, who was desperately in love with her, because she wished to marry him herself. This was the gossip of the day, reported by a graceless chatterbox. Mademoiselle is so frank about herself and everybody else, that one does not see why her own story should not be believed.

The Duke of Lorraine spent a winter in Paris with Prince Charles, a handsome, awkward lad, his nephew and heir. Both were constantly at the Luxembourg; but both preferred Mademoiselle's society to that of Madame, their sister and aunt. The Duke, at sixty, was more eccentric than ever; he slept anywhere, dined off "faïence," and fell violently in love with a girl called Marianne Pajot, the daughter of Mademoiselle's apothecary. He would even have married her, but his family appealed to the King, who clapped her into prison; and after some days of despair and fury the Duke fell in love with somebody else.

He was more worldly-wise for his nephew than for himself. It was very natural that Prince Charles should lose his heart to the young Princess, "belle comme le jour," beside whom,

according to the Abbé de Choisy, "la vieille Mademoiselle" looked like a grandmother. It is the way of seventeen to find thirty-five superannuated. But the Duke had his eye on the Montpensier fortune. On his knees he implored Mademoiselle to marry his nephew, and she, accustomed to look at marriage as a political combination, rather favoured the proposal. If the House of Lorraine was not actually a reigning House, it was one of the most distinguished in Europe. Daughters of France had married into it, and a Prince of Lorraine was no unworthy match for Henry IV's granddaughter. Mademoiselle declares that she had no idea, till enlightened by officious friends, that Prince Charles and her sister were in love with each other. That marriage was out of the question, for the Duke of Lorraine would not consent to it, and the Tuscan match was already arranged. But Mademoiselle, with the swift, romantic inconsequence which puzzled her contemporaries, whisked round suddenly and refused the Lorraine alliance. Prince Charles, honest boy, in taking a respectful leave of her, only found words to lament the loss of his splendid fortune. "This was all he cared for . . ." says Mademoiselle. "I answered very kindly, and thought him a fool."

But it was not only dancing, games, and young flirtations which made Mademoiselle's salon so interesting to a large part of society. Those who belonged to "la vieille cour" in age, in taste, or in sympathy, who preferred old Father Corneille to the rising light of Quinault, Pradon, even Racine, who loved to breathe what air was left of independent days before the Fronde, before an absolute King had drilled the Court after one model, discouraging adventure and killing romance—these people found themselves at home at the Luxembourg, where they talked as they liked, discussing literature and ideas with a freedom impossible elsewhere. Among Mademoiselle's guests, many of them old *habitues* of the Hôtel Rambouillet, were Madame de Sévigné, Madame de la Fayette, La Rochefoucauld, Madame de Thianges, Madame de Maure; the beautiful Eléonore de

Rohan, Abbess of Caen, daughter of Madame de Montbazou ; the Duchesse de Schomberg, *née* de Hautefort ; and such representative men of the old tradition as Chapelain, Ménage, Benserade, Boyer.

It was at the Luxembourg that the famous literary *Portraits* first invented by Mademoiselle de Scudéry were read and enjoyed before they became generally popular. They were a special delight to Mademoiselle, who wrote many herself, or commissioned her friends to write them. The amusing collection now known by her name—*La Galerie des Portraits de Mademoiselle de Montpensier*—was first printed under the care of Segrais the poet, gentleman in ordinary to Mademoiselle, in 1659. It is Segrais, by the way—described by his royal mistress as “une manière de savant, de bel esprit, qui était à moi”—to whom we owe *Les Divertissements de la Princesse Aurélie*, an account, under this clever and thin disguise, of her Court in exile at Saint-Fargeau. Many additions were made to the first collection of *Portraits*, and they are invaluable to any one who cares to know Mademoiselle's world and its ways of thinking. According to the old title, we have kings and queens, princes, princesses, duchesses, marchionesses, countesses, and all the most illustrious lords and ladies of France. In reality, the book contains all this and more : cardinals, bishops, abbots and abbesses, academicians, men of science and letters, *précieuses*, and many nameless persons who are none the less interesting as types of their day.

Mademoiselle's own portrait of herself is thoroughly characteristic, and all that we know of her bears witness to its general truth. She begins by saying that she prefers nature to art, and would rather be laughed at than pitied.

“I will begin with my exterior. I am tall, neither fat nor thin, of a fine and easy figure. I am good-looking and well made ; my hands and arms not beautiful ; but a fine skin and handsome neck ; my hair is of a brown fairness ; my face is long and well-shaped ; nose large and aquiline ; mouth neither large nor small, but expressive and agreeable ;

lips bright red ; teeth neither pretty nor hideous ; my eyes are blue, neither large nor small, but shining, sweet, and proud, like my whole appearance. My air is lofty, without arrogance. I am civil and familiar in manner, yet so as to gain respect rather than to lose it. My dress is very negligent, but never dirty ; I hate that ; I am clean ; and well dressed or not, everything I put on becomes me. I talk a good deal, without talking nonsense or using bad words." Here, it seems likely, Mademoiselle is not quite borne out by facts. ". . . I do not talk of what I do not understand, like talkative people generally. . . . I pique myself on being a good friend and very constant in my friendships, when I am lucky enough to find persons of merit whose humour suits my own ; for I do not choose to suffer from the inconstancy of others. . . . I am a dangerous enemy, being passionate and violent, and this, my birth also considered, may well cause my enemies to tremble ; but I have a good and noble soul. I am incapable of any low or dark action. . . . I am melancholy ; I like reading good solid books ; trifles bore me, except in verse ; I love that, of whatever kind it may be. . . . I like the world, and the conversation of well-bred people, and yet I am not too much bored with others ; persons of my quality must bear constraint, being born for others rather than for themselves. . . . Beyond everything I like soldiers, and to hear them talk of their profession ; and though I have said that I talk of nothing I do not understand, I must confess that I enjoy talking about war ; I feel myself very brave. I have much courage and ambition. . . . I am prompt in my resolutions, and firm in keeping them. To me nothing seems difficult in the service of my friends, or in obedience to those on whom I depend. I am disinterested ; I am incapable of any baseness, and I am made so indifferent to worldly things by a contempt for others and a good opinion of myself, that I would pass my whole life in solitude sooner than restrain my proud temper in anything, even if my fortune depended on it. I like being alone ; I show little complaisance and expect much ; I like

to please and to oblige ; I also like to vex and to torment. . . . I love violin music better than any other ; I used to care more for dancing than I do now, but I dance very well ; I hate playing cards and I love active games ; I can do all sorts of needlework ; it is one of my amusements, with hunting and riding. . . . I am not devout, I wish I was, and indeed I am very indifferent to the world, but I fear this is not true detachment, for I do not despise myself, and it seems to me that self-love is not a quality useful in devotion. . . . I apply myself earnestly to my affairs. . . . I love rule and order in the least things. I do not know if I am liberal, I know I like to be pompous and splendid, and to give to deserving persons and to those I love ; but as this is done to please my own fancy, I do not know if it can be called liberality. . . . As to gallantry, I have no inclination that way, and they even find fault with me because the poetry of passion is that which I like least, for I am not tender-hearted ; but if they say that I am equally insensible to friendship and to love, I deny it, for I do love those who deserve it, and I am the most grateful person in the world. . . .”

Such was the Princess to whom her cousin Louis XIV, regarding her as a mere chattel, a rich old maid, whose only use was that of a political tool, sent his royal command that she should marry the King of Portugal.

The full credit of this idea seems to belong to Louis himself. Mazarin was dead, lamented by few ; he was master of himself and of his kingdom, and it did not enter into his mind that any one, certainly not one of his own family, could resist his will. By this marriage he meant to help and encourage Portugal, whose independence, lately regained, was threatened by the power of Spain. The Peace of the Pyrenees so lately signed, an actual renewal of war with Spain was out of the question.

M. de Turenne, who had always been friendly with Mademoiselle, was sent to her by the King to open the subject by a seeming suggestion from himself. He asked for

an interview, but was so late in arriving that she nearly lost her patience and went out. His coach drove in as she was coming downstairs.

The worthy soldier with his frowning face was not a very clever diplomatist. Sitting by the fire in Mademoiselle's cabinet, he poured protestations of faithful friendship into her impatient ears. In downright fashion she asked, "What is it all about?"

"I wish to marry you," said Turenne.

"That won't be easy," she answered. "I am content as I am."

"I wish to make you a queen ; but listen, let me tell you all, and then speak. I wish to make you Queen of Portugal."

"Fie ! I'll have nothing to do with it."

"Young women of your quality should have no will," said Turenne solemnly. "Their will should be the King's will."

"Do you come to me from the King?"

Turenne lied boldly. It was his own idea, he declared ; and he laid the affair before Mademoiselle in the most favourable aspect possible, pointing out how entirely she would rule the young King, what independence she would enjoy, how King Louis would send a French army into the country, to be commanded by officers of her own choice ; he used, indeed, all arguments likely to appeal to her, and drew a very much too favourable portrait of Alfonso VI himself. That he was a fool, with no special characteristics, was rather an advantage in a husband. Neither could it be denied that he had been born paralysed on one side ; but this defect could hardly be seen when he was dressed—and no wonder, if he wore seven suits at once—except by a dragging of the leg and a difficulty in using the arm. The truth was—Mademoiselle probably knew it—that the miserable youth was utterly ignorant, violent, brutal, cowardly, unhealthy, a glutton and a drunkard, with personal habits that disgusted even an uncritical age.

No ! Mademoiselle laughed in Turenne's face. She was

clever enough to see through his protestations. "Je vous trouve un grand crédit!" Could he really dispose of the King's troops in this style, to forward an idea of his own? And her political sense objected to the risky position of a buffer between France and Spain.

"I would rather be Mademoiselle in France with five hundred thousand *livres* of income, asking nothing of the Court, honoured in my person and my quality. . . . If one is bored at Court, one goes into the country to hold one's own Court there. One builds; one amuses one's self. To be one's own mistress, that is happiness, for one does what one pleases."

Turenne became rather angry. He reminded her that even Mademoiselle was the King's subject, and that, for those who did not obey his will, he had the power to make life very uncomfortable.

"He may drive them from one end of the kingdom to the other. He may imprison them in their own house or may send them to a convent. They may be forced after much suffering to do what they might have done with a good grace. What have you to say to that?"

"That such as you do not threaten such as me; that I know my own affairs; that if the King spoke so to me, I should know how to answer him."

But it soon appeared that the King was really set on this odious plan. Mademoiselle found plenty of sympathy, even from the Queen-mother, who said it was a terrible pity, but "he is the master; I can say nothing." A heavy silence reigned throughout the spring. Louis XIV could not actually force his cousin into such a marriage, but he could make her live under the thunder-cloud of his displeasure. He was not, perhaps, quite convinced of her disobedience, her firm resolve not to be married for "le service du Roi," till the Court dispersed for the summer. When she went away to Forges for her usual cure they parted very coldly. A few weeks later she was ordered into exile at Saint-Fargeau. There, and at Eu, she spent the next two years. Her friends did not fail her, and she found amusement in building, re-

storing, and decorating her houses. But there is no doubt that this exile was much duller than the former one, though she bravely resolved to spend its long country winters "*sans en avoir aucun chagrin*." She was older, had lost some of her high spirit, cared little now for acting and games. Reading, writing, needlework, and walking could hardly fill the life of a princess of her years, while the French Court was growing more brilliant every day in the gorgeous meridian time of Louis XIV.

CHAPTER VI

1664-1670

“ Il parlait fort bien de la guerre,
Des cieux, du globe et de la terre,
Du droit civil, du droit canon,

“ Et connaissait assez les choses
Par leurs effets et par leurs causes.
—Était-il honnête homme? . . . Oh ! non.”

THE TITLE OF “MADEMOISELLE”—COURT AMUSEMENTS—AT THE LUXEMBOURG—THE DEATH OF ANNE OF AUSTRIA—THE FANCY FOR M. LE LAUZUN—AN ADVENTURE IN THE FLOODS—THE DEATH OF MADAME—“C’EST VOUS ! ”

IT was about this time—a point in the Princess’s story not always realised—that her world began to call her La Grande Mademoiselle. Not entirely owing to her unusual height or her airs of imperious majesty ; rather to the fact that *La Petite Mademoiselle* had entered on the field.

The King’s brother had married Princess Henrietta Stuart in 1661. Louis’s brutal remark is well known—“ Mon frère, vous allez épouser tous les os des Saints Innocents ”—the great cemetery of Paris—but it is also known that he himself was soon captivated by the grace and charm of that little thin girl. Marie Louise, eldest child of the young Monsieur and Madame, afterwards unhappily married to Charles II of Spain, took of course the title of *Mademoiselle*, which belonged by right to the King’s eldest niece. As she grew up, some distinction was necessary between her and her famous cousin ; and this is why Gaston’s daughter lives in all the history and memoirs of the time as La Grande Mademoiselle.

She returned from her second exile through the inter-

vention of Colbert, in the late summer of 1664, and joined the Court at Fontainebleau. She was cordially welcomed. Crowds of great and small, headed by Monsieur and the Prince de Condé, came driving to meet her along the forest roads. The King's clemency was popular, and Mademoiselle had a right to feel triumphant, though she remarks with a touch of very rare cynicism, "L'on a tant d'amis, quand on revient."

The Queen-mother received her affectionately, the King with a joking friendliness that seems to have satisfied her; she concluded that he was a little ashamed of himself. He administered kindness and flattery, and took her out on the canal *faire médianoche* with Madame and Mademoiselle de la Vallière, music and lanterns; this merry midnight meal between fast and feast-day was a favourite amusement of his. Like other fashions beginning at the top of society, it was comically misunderstood as it filtered down to the *bourgeoisie*. Madame de Sévigné tells the story of a good lady at Rennes, who at four o'clock in the afternoon boasted that she had just *fait médianoche* with the wife of a President of the Council. "Cela est bien d'une sotte bête qui veut être à la mode," says the amused Marquise.

Mademoiselle's uncle, the Duc de Guise, had died during her exile, and she appeared at Court in deep mourning for him. The sight of crêpe and serge annoyed the Queen-mother. "Too deep," she remarked. "One does not do that for people so far beneath one"; and actually sent Mademoiselle to change her dress. There was no appeal from Anne of Austria in matters of etiquette; but Mademoiselle thought that the remark would scarcely have gratified her stepmother, or any of the House of Lorraine. Neither did it suit her natural loyalty to those of her own blood. "Bien que très altière," says Saint-Simon, she was never ashamed of her smallest relations.

It was becoming improbable that Mademoiselle would ever marry. Her own proud and critical humour was against it, as well as the passage of years. Possible matches



MADemoisELLE DE MONTPENSIER
FROM AN ENGRAVING BY N. DE L'ARMESSIN

were becoming fewer. Charles II of England had married a Portuguese princess ; later on, a daughter of the Duchesse de Nemours, *née* Élisabeth de Vendôme, took Mademoiselle's place on the undesired throne of Portugal. But Louis XIV had not given up the idea of finding a useful husband for his rich cousin. He proposed that she should marry the Duke of Savoy, lately a widower through the death of her youngest half-sister. This match was seriously considered by Mademoiselle, but the Duke himself was not attracted, and the matter soon dropped. The Prince de Condé had had the assurance to propose that she should marry his son, the Duc d'Enghien, then a lad of eighteen. She excused herself on account of the difference in age, but confided to her Memoirs that the young Prince was far from attractive ; ugly and of a low appearance, as clever as his grandfather, but even more mean and miserly. As long as Mademoiselle's affections were free, she was a shrewd judge of character.

We may imagine her settled once more in her apartments at the Luxembourg, her salon constantly open to all her friends of the old world. Some of her prejudices kept her a little behind the times, yet she never ceased to be an important and conspicuous figure in society. Her affection for Corneille, though it blinded her to the merits of Racine, did not now hinder her from appreciating Molière. *Le Tartuffe* was acted at the Luxembourg in 1669, at the very gay wedding of Mademoiselle de Créqui, one of Mademoiselle's maids of honour, with the Comte de Jarnac. After being interdicted for two years because of supposed disrespect to the Church, it had become the most fashionable play in Paris.

Mademoiselle seems to have cared little for the new invention of the Opera, which enchanted society about this time, although she highly admired the genius of its creator. The famous Jean-Baptiste Lulli owed his first appearance in France to her. As a boy, he was brought from Florence at her request by the Chevalier de Guise, that she might learn Italian by talking with him. He was first a footman, then a

musician in her household, and though she never learned much Italian, the lovely airs he composed without any science of music, his fine acting, and especially his wonderful dancing, delighted her. He left her service, passing into that of the King, when she was exiled after the Fronde. He arrived at his full fame years later, when Quinault and he, with their new conjunction of sentimental drama and suggestive music, lifted French society quite off its prosaic feet. Mademoiselle, however, praises Lulli chiefly as "un grand baladin."

One is hardly *en plein Louis Quatorze*, perhaps, till after the death of the one person who had any influence on his moral character in earlier life, at least so far as that he could not flaunt his mistresses openly before her eyes, his mother, Anne of Austria. The bitter January of 1666 saw the end of her long and terribly painful illness. She bore it, without any alleviations, rather with extra suffering caused by ignorant doctors, like a brave Christian woman. When it became evident that no human skill could save her life, the King consulted those near to him, Mademoiselle among them, as to whether the shrine of Sainte-Geneviève should be brought down and carried through the streets. Mademoiselle was against it.

"I told him it seemed to me that miracles were not things of every day; that the Queen's illness was incurable, except by a miracle; that in our time they were no longer performed; that we were not good enough to draw down such blessings. He said, 'That is my opinion; but every one wishes for it; they say it is the custom.' He could not decide; but the next day he came to tell me that it was to be brought down."

Then, whether she expected a miracle or not, Mademoiselle hastened to do what she believed her duty, joining in the processions which marched from all sides of Paris to meet the sacred relic and convey it through the streets. She also attended a special service in her own church, Saint-Severin. Saint-Sulpice was naturally the parish church of the Luxembourg, but Mademoiselle had returned from her

last exile in a church-going frame of mind, and a quarrel with the clergy of Saint-Sulpice, who were very friendly with her stepmother, was the consequence. Archbishop de Péréfixe—the Gondi reign in Paris was over—wisely permitted the Princess and her household to perform their religious duties at the ancient church of Saint-Severin.

Those were sad days for Mademoiselle, made sadder still by the dying Queen's forgetfulness of one who had been "brought up so near to her." Anne's farewell words were only for her two sons and their wives; nothing for Mademoiselle and nothing for the Prince de Condé. Historians say that she never forgave the Fronde, and yet such intentional vengeance at such an hour seems unlikely. The poor Queen's mortal weakness, the great crowd all night in the death-chamber, the busy priests with their ceremonies, the fainting King, Monsieur, broken-hearted, at his mother's pillow; it is not much wonder if the Princess, too much troubled, as she herself says, to know what she was doing, found herself passed over in the pushing, staring confusion round that death-bed.

She was not forgotten in the painful duties that followed; on the contrary, they depended chiefly on her. Instantly after the Queen-mother had breathed her last her sons fled, the King to Versailles, Monsieur to Saint-Cloud, while the great bell of Notre Dame tolled solemnly over Paris. Mademoiselle, as first Princess of the blood, took the leading place in the funeral pomps at Saint-Denis, starting from the Louvre at seven o'clock in the morning. She was four hours on the way; the Queen's coffin still longer, for the monks went out in chanting procession to meet it.

"It was horribly cold," writes Mademoiselle. "I never was so cold. I thought I had the fever; for the excessive cold threw me into a violent heat at the church door; we were there a long time, for M. d'Auch made a harangue and the Prior replied. I was so tired and exhausted that I leaned my head against the bier and remained so a long time without knowing it. . . ."

Whatever the lifelong coldness between them, Mademoiselle had good reason to mourn for Anne of Austria. If the Queen had lived a few years longer—she was only sixty-four when she died—her great influence and her sense of royal dignity might have saved Mademoiselle from the foolish entanglement which made her society's laughing-stock and ruined all her later years.

She was nearly forty when the Queen-mother died. In the days of Louis XIV, a middle-aged, unmarried woman, especially of high birth, was a rarity. Great ladies either married or became "religious"; a half-way house hardly existed, except for people of real eccentricity, who lived apart from the world in their own way. But Mademoiselle's eccentricity was not of this kind, and whatever theories she may have played with in her correspondence, she had no real wish to shut herself out from society, being at the same time quite aware that every year would make her position more difficult.

After Queen Anne's death she was constantly at Court. Her latest exile had taught her that life was hardly liveable outside her royal cousin's good graces. He was now very kind to her; Monsieur kept up all his old friendliness; Henrietta, who formerly disliked her, had come to confess—"Quand on vous connoit, on vous aime"; the poor Queen, neglected and sulky, was always fond of her; last, not least, she was on terms of cordial intimacy with Madame de Montespan. This means that she accepted the new Court atmosphere to the full, taking the presence of "the ladies" as a necessary part of life. For her, the King's divinity could do no wrong; now, as ever, Louis had no more devout worshipper than his cousin of Montpensier.

And Madame de Montespan, with all her many sins, was an amazingly agreeable woman. Mademoiselle had known her all her life; naturally or not, she seems to have found that present developments made little difference. The care of her own morals had always been enough for her. She went so far as to scold M. de Montespan for his "extra-

ordinary conduct" at Saint-Germain in making a scene with the King, comparing His Majesty to David and threatening him with God's judgments if he did not restore his wife.

"You are mad," said Mademoiselle to this very extravagant man. "Il ne faut point faire tous ces contes. They would come better from your uncle, the Archbishop of Sens."

She thought her harangue admirable, but M. de Montespan went on raving. And it is interesting to notice that the irreproachable Madame de Montausier—who had been ill ever since she saw a ghost, a tall woman coming to meet her in a dark passage of the Tuileries—was also extremely angry with the "fury and insolence" of M. de Montespan.

Still, Mademoiselle was not altogether happy. However welcome the young Court might make her, it did not become easier, year by year, for a decent woman of her age to throw herself into all its wild diversions. She began to feel a little lonely; it occurred to her, no doubt, that she might have done well to marry in her younger days; even foggy England may have had a thought of regret. She was conscious that people were beginning to speculate on the great inheritance which must fall to somebody one of these days, when *la vieille* Mademoiselle was dead. A fine division of estates there would be; Eu here, Saint-Fargeau there, and all the rest in stately procession. The will of this royal old maid would be a nine-days' wonder.

Then, her mind prepared by a certain restless discontent, she took a sudden fancy; to no prince of her own degree, no "old courtier of the Queen," but the "King's young courtier." There was nothing very ridiculous in it, after all. It is not impossible, or even extraordinary, for a woman to fall in love at forty-two; many a happy marriage has begun as late as this; and the Comte de Lauzun was only about five years younger than Mademoiselle de Montpensier. He was a daring soldier, and had distinguished himself specially in the short war with Spain, which ended in 1668 with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Mademoiselle had already noticed the little man with favour, and it was with growing

interest that she heard of his exploits and adventures in that war; how he made his two thousand dragoons dismount and deliver a flank attack which routed the enemy; how he was wounded, his clothes torn to rags, but would not give the surgeons time to dress his wounds before he was off to fight again. After this campaign Lauzun was made Captain of the King's Guards. He would have been Grand Master of the Artillery but for the intervention of Louvois, who obtained that place for the Comte du Lude—"fort grand seigneur," says Mademoiselle, in birth, air, and estate; a brother of her early friend the Duchesse de Roquelaure, who had died still beautiful and young.

Lauzun was a favourite with his royal master, and in his own peculiar way a singularly brilliant creature. He was a curious mixture of brutality and charm, hard as iron, clever as the devil, a fascinating talker, a desperate flirt. His love affairs were legion, but few cared for him without having cause to repent it; though he could be kind and generous, he was malicious to the last degree, and more insolent, even to the King himself, than any courtier of the time. Louis forgave a great deal from his dashing little favourite, believing in his personal devotion to himself; but one day Lauzun irritated him so far that he flung his cane out of the window, saying that he should be sorry to strike a gentleman.

The story of Lauzun's behaviour to Madame de Monaco, as told by Saint-Simon, is characteristic. She was a Grammont, sister of the famous Comte de Guiche, and an intimate friend of the young Duchesse d'Orléans. Lauzun was desperately in love with her, and believed he had cause to be jealous of the King.

"One summer afternoon, having gone to Saint-Cloud, he found Madame and her Court sitting on the ground for coolness, and Madame de Monaco half lying down, one hand flung out with the palm upwards. Lauzun begins to flirt with the ladies, and turns round so cleverly that he plants his heel in the hollow of Madame de Monaco's hand, makes

a pirouette, and walks off. Madame de Monaco had the strength not to scream, and to hold her peace."

It was in the summer of 1669 that Mademoiselle began to find great pleasure and amusement in talking to M. de Lauzun. She found the little hero most agreeable; his conversation was charming, his power of expressing himself quite extraordinary. He paid her delightful compliments; at the same time, understanding only too well the simple character he had to deal with, he spoke with the fearless candour of a friend. After a few months of an acquaintance which became ever more intimate, she began to confess to herself that it would be difficult to live without him. "I began to regard him," she says, "as the best and most agreeable man in the world, and to know that I should find happiness with such a husband, whom I could love, and who would love me; that no one had ever been such a friend to me; that I must for once in my life taste the sweetness of feeling myself loved by some one worth loving in return."

She allowed herself to think and to dream; planning all that she could do for him, and persuading herself that her old master Corneille, who had taught her to despise the weakness of love, would have said that in this case two people were predestined for each other. The more she thought, the more brightly the idea smiled upon her. The chief difficulty was that the first advances must come from herself. But a happy opportunity seemed to offer in a report that the King thought once more of marrying her to a Prince of Lorraine. She resolved to discuss the whole subject of marriage with this new friend, whose proud airs suggested that he might be "*l'empereur de tout le monde*."

Lauzun was in favour of her marrying. He pointed out to her, very frankly, how ridiculous and how miserable was the lot of an old maid, debarred, as she ought to be, from all worldly pleasures, and occupied only with hearing sermons and visiting the poor and the hospitals. But he saw no absolute necessity that Mademoiselle, at her age, should

insist on marrying a foreign prince. Why not raise some French nobleman to her own level? Her choice would make any man equal to royalty in greatness and power.

It was only thus that the astute Lauzun, well aware of Mademoiselle's growing passion, gave the smallest sign of understanding her. He was too wise to hurry things on. "The right man would be difficult to find," he said, and retired ceremoniously. Mademoiselle was disappointed, but not discouraged. She knew her own mind now, and that in itself was happiness. They met constantly during that spring of 1670, and talked of many things, including theology and devotion. She admired his natural, unstudied eloquence, never at a loss for the right word. Life had a new charm. Even a passing glance and greeting, when their coaches crossed in the street, made the day joyful for her.

At the end of April the Court left Paris for a grand progress in the eastern provinces, lately the scene of war, and M. de Lauzun commanded the troops of the royal escort. The whole affair was more like the passage of an army than the triumphal journey of a Court; the numbers, including royal personages, royal mistresses, courtiers and officials, servants of every kind, and almost the whole of that society which was learning more and more to live for and by the King, amounted to more than twelve thousand persons. The baggage and furniture needed by all this crowd was naturally enormous. Everybody who was anybody conveyed all his necessary household goods and his *batterie de cuisine*; every night saw scenes of despair because servants and waggons had not arrived, having stuck in the mire. The roads and the weather were horrible; the Queen, who loved her comforts, complained incessantly; the King, Monsieur, and Mademoiselle made light of difficulties in the true spirit of French Royalty.

All her life Mademoiselle had suffered from one fear, that of water; in crossing a river, she always screamed louder than anybody else; and the dangers of this north-eastern progress quite equalled those of the iceberg-laden Rhône, ten

years before. Mademoiselle's account of an adventure on the 3rd of May is too characteristic to be left out. The country between St. Quentin and Landrecies was full of marshes, the Sambre was in flood, and there were torrents of rain. The long file of coaches, carts, and horsemen had to cross the river by a ford, rapidly becoming dangerous. Those in front got over safely; then the rising water began to come in at the coach-doors; then one of the gentlemen had to leave his coach in the middle of the river and escape to land on horseback. It was late at night; the darkness and storm, the torches flickering in the black water, terrified the Queen and Mademoiselle; but the King rode beside them to another and safer ford and insisted on their trying it. This too proved impossible; they screamed frightfully and had to return to the high road. Mademoiselle, with the Queen and Madame de Béthune, took shelter in a wretched cottage of two rooms, in a meadow by the roadside. The floor was of mud, and Mademoiselle slipped knee-deep into a hole, after which she retired to her own coach, had the horses taken out, put on her night-cap and dressing-gown, and made herself comfortable among cushions. But the noise all round made sleep impossible.

Presently her restless ears heard Monsieur's voice not far off. On inquiry she found that he was in his coach with Madame, Madame de Thianges, and others, and on their invitation she had herself carried through the mud to pay them a visit. They were starving, but merry; except poor little Henrietta, delicate and unwell, even now within a few months of her fatal illness. She only was "abattue." But Mademoiselle did not enjoy the visit, for Monsieur, perhaps of malice, began talking to M. de Villeroy of M. de Lauzun, whose exposure to the weather already troubled her.

"I should be sorry to show myself to everybody in the state of M. de Lauzun. He does not look well with his soaked hair; never did I see a man so frightful."

M. de Villeroy agreed; he had private reasons for disliking Lauzun.

Mademoiselle said to herself, "And I think he looks well, whatever state he may be in. And he does not care to please you ; and I think he knows that he pleases me."

She returned to her own coach, and did not leave it again till the welcome news of food summoned her to join the King and Queen at the cottage. She found the Queen in a very bad temper, for the King was arranging that all their party should sleep on the floor of the larger room, on mattresses brought from the baggage-waggon.

"Horrible! What! sleep all together!" cried Marie Thérèse ; and she wondered, not unnaturally, where was the pleasure in such journeys. Her propriety was also shocked ; but Mademoiselle took the King's part, and represented that there could be no harm in ten or twelve women sleeping in the same room with him and Monsieur. The Queen could say no more about that, but she did not recover her temper. She turned with disgust from the thin and chilly soup which had been sent from Landrecies by way of supper ; it seems that the royal *batterie de cuisine* had been left behind in the mud. The King and Mademoiselle, with Monsieur and Madame, fell ravenously upon the soup and soon finished it. Then the Queen grumbled sadly, "I wanted some and they have eaten it all!" A dish of doubtful-looking meat saved the situation. There were chickens, but so tough that two persons, seizing each a leg, could scarcely tear them asunder.

However, every one laughed except the Queen, though she was better off than the rest, having a real bed close to a blazing fire, a coign of vantage from which she could survey the room. It was a curious sight. The floor was covered with mattresses, and on these lay nine ladies, including Madame, Mademoiselle, Madame de Montespan, and Madame de la Vallière, besides Louis XIV and his brother. They all wore nightcaps, and had put on dressing-gowns over their clothes, and they had a few cloaks and rugs to cover them. M. de Lauzun and other gentlemen were in the inner room ; on the other side, oxen and asses in a stable. Altogether, a singular situation for the Court of France, and Madame

de Thianges, always a wag, made irreverent jokes which disturbed even the Queen's Spanish gravity.

Mademoiselle, at least, found it possible to sleep ; and she woke up with satisfaction, when the news that a bridge was made roused them at four o'clock in the morning, to feel sure that she looked better than the other ladies, pale without their rouge and disfigured by wakefulness. She, at least, with her fine natural colour, need not fear an early meeting with the hero of her dreams.

The flirtation went on apace. Lauzun, following out his doctrine that the Bourbons were best managed by being "rudoyés," scolded her well for her foolish terror and want of self-control in crossing the water. She nearly betrayed herself by asking the King to tell him to put on his hat when he was riding beside him, receiving the royal orders in pouring torrents of rain. Still, Lauzun was too clever to commit himself openly ; and Mademoiselle, excited, anxious, and happy, was not yet entirely sure of him. She sometimes fancied that he did not really understand her intentions. He was ready enough to discuss her marriage with some imaginary gentleman ; he would not yet presume so far as to put himself in that exalted gentleman's place.

Thus things were slowly proceeding, when the summer pleasures of Versailles were interrupted by the sudden illness of Madame Henriette, lately returned from her visit to England. The Court thronged to Saint-Germain to watch the death-bed, so tragic in all its circumstances. People have ceased to believe, now, that the unhappy Princess was poisoned by her husband in that famous glass of chicory water. Mademoiselle, though living in a world of wholesale poisonings, and quite as ignorant as her neighbours in matters of health, never credited that cruel report. But everything that she says about Madame and her extreme delicacy shows how easily fatigue and chill might have developed into acute peritonitis.

Madame herself thought the worst. Mademoiselle describes how she lay there, wasted to a shadow, crying out

with pain, her wild, pitiful eyes watching all the spectators and wondering at their tranquillity. Mademoiselle, with some human feeling, was strongly affected. She held the dying girl's hand and listened to her faint words of farewell: "You are losing a good friend. . . . I was beginning to know and to love you."

Mademoiselle went raging to the doctors, who seem to have done nothing but stare helplessly. "I said to them, 'One never lets a woman die without trying any remedy at all.' They looked at each other and said nothing. People were talking in the room; going and coming; almost laughing."

According to Mademoiselle's own story, it was she alone who induced Monsieur to send for a priest, and Monsieur, with his usual eye to effect, to what would look well in the *Gazette*, did his poor wife the eternal kindness of sending for Bossuet, just nominated to the see of Condom. So Bossuet knew what he was saying when he preached that *oraison funèbre* which has given Henriette more fame in her death than her somewhat butterfly life could ever have merited. It was only a few months since she had listened to the eloquence that mourned her mother, the Queen of England.

The first consequence of Madame's death was the probability of Monsieur's marriage with his cousin, Mademoiselle. There was no pretence, of course, of anything but the merest "convenience." They had never disliked each other. Mademoiselle's friendships were not given to change, and it is plain that if the King had insisted on such a marriage, she would at first have put aside her own strong wishes to obey him. There was the attraction, not a small one, of the best place in the royal coach next to the King and Queen.

But every day, as the autumn advanced, Monsieur's charm grew less. Frivolous and heartless, governed by selfish favourites, Mademoiselle contrasted him with M. de Lauzun, whose behaviour at this trying time was a marvel of clever-



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ness. Putting himself entirely on one side, with a manly cheerfulness only too admirable, he represented to Mademoiselle all the advantages of a marriage with Monsieur. Finally, in a fit of impatience, Mademoiselle begged the King to let her hear no more of it. Louis, who cared little, after all, to see her fortune in his brother's hands, answered good-naturedly, "You shall do as you like; I will put no constraint on anybody."

It was not long before Mademoiselle, weary of uncertainty, told M. de Lauzun the answer to the riddle she had so long set him: who, among the nobles of France, was her chosen husband? She wrote two words on a sheet of paper, and gave it to him on a cold Sunday in December, as they stood by the fire after returning from Mass with the Queen. The words were, "C'est vous!"

CHAPTER VII

1670

“ Rodrigue, qui l’eût cru ?—Chimène, qui l’eût dit ?—
Que notre heur fût si proche, et sitôt se perdît ?—
Et que si près du port, contre toute apparence,
Un orage si prompt brisât notre espérance ?—
Ah ! mortelles douleurs !—Ah ! regrets superflus ! ”

MADAME DE SÉVIGNÉ’S LETTER—INDIGNATION—DELAYS AND WARNINGS—THE FATAL THURSDAY—THE MARRIAGE FORBIDDEN

ON Monday, December 15th, 1670, the Marquise de Sévigné wrote from Paris the famous, untranslatable letter to her cousin, M. de Coulanges.

“ Je m’en vais vous mander la chose la plus étonnante, le plus surprenante, la plus merveilleuse, le plus miraculeuse, la plus triomphante, la plus étourdissante, la plus inouïe, la plus singulière, la plus extraordinaire, la plus incroyable, la plus imprévue, la plus grande, la plus petite, la plus rare, la plus commune, la plus éclatante, la plus secrète jusqu’à aujourd’hui, la plus brillante, la plus digne d’envie . . . une chose que nous ne saurions croire à Paris, comment la pourroit-on croire à Lyon ? une chose qui fait crier miséricorde à tout le monde . . . une chose enfin qui se fera dimanche, où ceux qui la verront croiront avoir la *berlue*, une chose qui se fera dimanche, et qui ne sera peut-être pas faite lundi. Je ne puis me résoudre à vous la dire, devinez-la, je vous le donne en trois ; *jetez-vous votre langue aux chiens* ? Hé bien ! il faut donc vous la dire. M. de Lauzun épouse dimanche au Louvre, devinez qui ? Je vous le donne en quatre, je vous le donne en six, je vous le donne en cent. . . . Vous n’y êtes pas. Il faut donc à la fin vous le dire : il épouse dimanche au Louvre, avec la permission du Roi, mademoiselle, ma-

demoiselle de . . . mademoiselle, devinez le nom ; il épouse Mademoiselle, la grande Mademoiselle, Mademoiselle, fille de feu Monsieur, Mademoiselle, petite-fille de Henri IV, Mademoiselle d'Eu, Mademoiselle de Dombes, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, Mademoiselle d'Orléans, Mademoiselle, cousine germaine du Roi, Mademoiselle, destinée au trône, Mademoiselle, le seul parti de France qui fût digne de Monsieur. Voilà un beau sujet de discourir. Si vous criez, si vous êtes hors de vous-même, si vous dites que nous avons menti, que cela est faux, qu'on se moque de vous, que voilà une belle raillerie . . . si enfin vous nous dites des injures, nous trouvons que vous avez raison ; nous en avons fait autant que vous. . . .”

Louis XIV had consented, against his better judgment, to the marriage of his cousin with M. de Lauzun. In the curious letter written to all his ambassadors abroad after the breaking off of the marriage, a letter which shows that the affair was supposed to interest foreign Courts almost as much as his own, he says that for the honour of the French nobility, having allowed his younger cousin to marry the Duc de Guise, a cadet of the House of Lorraine, he could not refuse her sister to one of themselves—“shrugging my shoulders in amazement at my cousin's self-will, and merely saying that she was forty-three years old and could do as she pleased.”

The King's final consent was given to four noblemen, friends of Lauzun, on Monday the 15th, and was conveyed to Mademoiselle by M. de Montausier. With the freedom of an old acquaintance, he advised her to lose no time. Lauzun had more enemies than friends, and some of the former were powerful, among them Monsieur, the minister Louvois, and—secretly and traitorously—Madame de Montespan.

“Take my advice, and be married this very evening,” said M. de Montausier.

Mademoiselle had good sense enough to know that he was right, and an interview with the Queen, who did not conceal her angry disgust at the news, was an even more effective warning. But Lauzun was too proud, and also too vain, to

listen to counsels of prudence. The idea of making the finest marriage in France hurriedly and in a corner was unbearable to this *cadet de Gascogne*, sure of himself and proud of his long descent. His confidence in the King, and even—so blind was he—in Madame de Montespan, was not to be shaken by any arguments. He told Mademoiselle he feared nothing, except that she might change her mind. He was safe there; the poor woman was wildly happy, and desperately in love. Her mind was full of the brilliant future she was providing for him; the honours and estates she was eager to heap upon him. She had already planned his new equipage for the coming year: he must adopt her royal liveries in place of his own; his very horse-cloths would be powdered with fleurs-de-lys. Mademoiselle was not the person to imitate her half-sister, Madame de Guise, who had meekly accepted her husband's liveries.

Madame de Sévigné's letter only reflects the amazing excitement caused in all ranks of society by the news of the coming marriage. She wrote on the very day that it was made public, and when the first and the general cry was "Impossible!" The Parisians were sending out for news, running wildly in and out of each other's houses, full of curiosity and wonder. It was long since Paris had been so startled, so stirred, so struck with consternation that quickly changed into anger. "A thing to be done on Sunday, perhaps to be still undone on Monday"—the Marquise, an unconscious prophet, shared the feeling of her neighbours. They could not believe it. Their favourite Princess, an institution among them, always popular, good-natured, simple and human, yet stately and royal, to throw herself and her immense hereditary possessions, which made her almost a monarch in her own right, into the arms of a little mean-looking courtier, a Captain of the King's Guards! It was shameful, it was degrading, and the King degraded himself, as well as Mademoiselle, by his consent. In fact, people were more angry with Louis XIV than with Mademoiselle. They said that the honour of royalty, which meant

the honour of France, ought to have been safe in his keeping.

It seems likely that the King began to regret his consent as soon as he had given it. While Paris chattered and raged, nearly all the royal personages and people of influence at Court attacked His Majesty with strong remonstrances. The Queen declared that she would not sign the contract; Monsieur, with great violence, cried that Mademoiselle ought to be sent to a mad-house and Lauzun thrown out of the window; Monsieur le Prince and the Maréchal de Villeroy added their arguments on the same side. The Dowager Madame, usually buried in silence and almost forgotten, wrote the King "*une grande lettre*" on the subject; and the whole House of Lorraine gathered itself into a phalanx to support her.

Rumours of all this reached Mademoiselle, and made her a little uneasy; from the first, she hardly shared M. de Lauzun's confidence in the King's word. Her private secretary, Guilloire, an honest man who heard what Paris said and who had foreseen what was coming, boldly told her that she would be the laughing-stock of Europe. She forgave him for the time—Mademoiselle loved frank speech, whether guided by it or not—but a few months later she dismissed both him and Segrais from her household, her patience being exhausted by the active dislike they showed to M. de Lauzun. As long, indeed, as the infatuation lasted, the position of her faithful servants was not easy.

Whatever society thought, during the three days that followed that eventful Monday, it behaved generally as if the marriage was a settled thing. On Tuesday it came thronging to the Luxembourg with compliments and congratulations. The Archbishops of Paris and Reims disputed the honour of performing the ceremony. Lauzun's comrades paid their duty to Mademoiselle with military jokes which amused her; various gentlemen who had had "a slight coldness" with him came to ask her good offices towards reconciliation. In the evening, in the Queen's cabinet, Her

Majesty being shut up in her oratory and devoured by sulks, Mademoiselle and M. de Lauzun had a lively interview with the Comte de Rochefort, then on duty as Captain of the Guard. He was one of the many who had not been on good terms with Lauzun, but he now frankly offered his friendship to the fortunate man.

When were they to be married? They did not know. M. de Rochefort stared in laughing surprise. "The sooner the better!" he said. "Don't delay. To-day is safer than to-morrow. At your height of happiness, you have everything to fear." He added, "I never saw such happiness. I wish you could look into a mirror and see how joy and content are painted on both your faces."

"I am sure," said Mademoiselle, "I have more reason to be happy than M. de Lauzun has."

Her intended husband, who all through this crisis made a rule to himself of dignified silence and "point de folies," said nothing at all. M. de Rochefort's mockery was checked by the entrance of the displeased Queen.

Warnings from M. de Guity, Lauzun's friend, pressed on the necessity of a speedy and quiet marriage, and sent Mademoiselle to bed with a fit of vapours.

Early on Wednesday morning, before her hair was dressed, M. de Lauzun and the Duc de Montausier were announced. She put on a smart cap, and sat up in her bed to receive them.

M. de Montausier was in a very serious mood, and full of the dangers of delay. He asked the unpractical lovers how they could be so foolish as to suppose that such a marriage would be a grand ceremony, *de couronne à couronne*, as if both sides were royal. Mademoiselle defended herself. "I have always told him," she said, "that he was cleverer than I; that it should be as he pleased; but that in my opinion, once having the King's consent, we ought to be married without a word to any one else, appearing suddenly in the world as Monsieur and Madame de Montpensier."

M. de Montausier agreed with her, and then turned angrily

on Lauzun, who was leaning against the bedpost, staring at the pictures on the wall.

"Voyons donc! You have no time to lose. You have something else to do than to look at pictures. Cannot you attend to your own business?"

There followed a long discussion. M. de Lauzun was on the edge of losing his temper; these hurried arrangements injured his vanity, and he allowed himself to speak sharply to Mademoiselle, both as to her men of business, who were to set to work instantly on the contract, and as to where and when the marriage should take place. Sunday, a Court function, the chapel at the Louvre; they both recognised that all this was now out of the question. To please him, though it hardly suited her dignity to be married among people who were his friends and not hers, she agreed to the Duc de Richelieu's house at Conflans. The ceremony was fixed for the next day at noon. She showed a generous trust and affection which struck Monsieur de Montausier, a man capable of understanding character. He had no doubt of her loyalty. He could not say as much for his friend Lauzun, with all his brilliant qualities. And he may well have marvelled at the Princess's choice, as he looked at her bridegroom standing there.

Her own description of Lauzun, given a few days later, with sobs and tears, to Madame de Noailles, is worth quoting. If this was the best that she, so much in love, could find to say of him, one is certainly driven to believe in the sort of magnetic power, the irresistible "*je ne sais quoi*," which some writers attribute to him.

"He is a little man; no one can say that his figure is not upright, pretty, and agreeable. His legs are handsome; he does everything with an air. He has thin light hair mixed with grey, ill kept and often greasy; fine blue eyes, but almost always red; a lively look and manner. His smile is pleasing. The end of his nose is sharp and red; there is something lofty in his whole physiognomy; he is careless in his dress; when he chooses to be smart, he looks very well.

There you have the man. As to his temper and his manners, I defy any one to know, describe, or copy them. *Enfin*, he pleases me ; I love him passionately."

All that day, again, complimentary crowds besieged the Luxembourg. The King's Ministers were among the first to arrive ; M. de Louvois and the three Secretaries of State, M. de Lyonne, M. Colbert, M. Le Tellier. There were many ladies, some of whom showed such exaggerated enthusiasm for Mademoiselle, kissing her hands and dress with cries of " *Que vous êtes adorable !*" that she was not particularly pleased, even before she knew that these women were mostly old flames of M. de Lauzun's. So many people came, she says, that she was obliged at length to go out, or the house would never have been empty. In the evening the lawyers arrived to draw up the contract, and Mademoiselle announced to them that she made a formal donation to M. de Lauzun of the duchy of Montpensier, the county of Eu, and the principality of Dombes. Later on she was informed that the projected wedding at Conflans would be impossible, as the Duchesse de Richelieu (Anne de Fors du Vigean) did not dare offend the Queen by lending her house. This difficulty was got over by the obliging kindness of the Maréchale de Créqui, who offered a house at Charenton. Then the only necessary business was to obtain dispensations from the Archbishop of Paris, both as to the banns and as to being married in Advent. No hitch seemed likely ; though certain remarks made by the Archbishop, reaching Mademoiselle's ears, disturbed her confidence in him.

Thursday, December 18th, was to have been the happiest day of Mademoiselle's life : it turned out to be the most miserable. The first news that reached her was a " *coup de massue* " ; the contract, which had to be signed by the King and Queen, was not ready ; therefore to be married that day was out of the question. It would seem that Mademoiselle's men of business took their own view of her interests, and did all in their power to delay the making over of her estates to M. de Lauzun in the wholesale fashion she wished. They

heard the gossip of Paris, the growling of Lauzun's enemies near the throne, and they shared the general, increasing doubt as to the end of the affair. This doubt had now invaded Lauzun himself: he began to see that it was not an easy matter to marry a princess such as Mademoiselle in spite of public opinion. It seems likely that from the earliest hours of Thursday he knew the marriage would not come off.

Mademoiselle faced no such possibility. She would not be married till after midnight on Friday; but she was satisfied that by one o'clock on Saturday morning all would be over, and they would drive back together from Charenton to the Luxembourg.

Madame de Sévigné visited her on Thursday morning, and found her writing a letter in bed: to Lauzun, no doubt, after the news of the enforced delay.

"She told me to whom she was writing, and why, and the fine presents she had made the day before, and the name she had given; that there was no match for her in Europe, and that she wished to marry. She told me word for word a conversation she had had with the King; she seemed transported with the joy of making a man happy; she spoke with tenderness of the merit and the gratitude of M. de Lauzun. After all this, I said to her, 'Mon Dieu, Mademoiselle, you seem well satisfied; but why did you not finish the thing off promptly on Monday? Don't you know that so great a delay gives the whole kingdom time to talk, and that it is tempting God and the King to keep such an extraordinary affair dragging on so long?' She said I was right, but she was so full of confidence that my discourse made only a slight impression on her then. She went back to Lauzun's good qualities and distinguished birth. I repeated these lines from *Polyeucte*—

Du moins on ne la peut blâmer d'un mauvais choix :
Polyeucte a du nom, et sort du sang des Rois.

She embraced me cordially. This conversation lasted an hour; it is impossible to repeat all; but I was certainly very

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agreeable all the time, and I may say it without vanity, for she was glad to speak to somebody, her heart was too full. At ten o'clock she gave herself over to the rest of France, which came to pay compliments. . . ."

In the afternoon Mademoiselle amused herself with arranging a fine apartment for M. de Montpensier. The Abbé de Choisy and others were with her towards evening.

"She led us," he says, "into an adjoining room, destined for M. de Lauzun. It was magnificently furnished. 'Don't you think,' she said, 'that such a lodging is good enough for a *cadet de Gascogne* ?'"

She made all her arrangements for the next day: confession in the morning, the start for Charenton at four o'clock. She had a rather uncomfortable interview with Lauzun, whose mind was so disagreeably impressed by the general opposition—involving hints of personal danger for himself—that he begged her to consider seriously what she was doing, and to gratify her world by withdrawing at the last moment, if she now felt the slightest regret or uncertainty. She would not listen to anything he said, her one concern being that he should take care of a severe cold which made his eyes redder than usual. His sister, Madame de Nogent, with other ladies who were present, laughed gaily at them both. Lauzun went away sad. Mademoiselle, troubled by some heavy presentiment, could not restrain her tears.

At eight o'clock came the summons from the King. Arrived at the Louvre, she was conducted to his private room, and this seemed to her of evil omen. They were not actually alone together, for Louis had provided himself with a witness: the Prince de Condé was hidden behind the door. But Mademoiselle did not know that.

"I found the King quite alone," she writes, "sad and moved. He said to me, 'I am in despair at what I have to tell you. I am told the world says I am sacrificing you to make M. de Lauzun's fortune; that this will injure me abroad, and that I ought not to allow the affair to be concluded. You have reason to complain of me; beat me, if

you like. No rage of yours can surpass what I deserve and will endure.'

"'Ah!' I cried, 'Sire, what are you saying? What cruelty!' I threw myself at his feet and said, 'Sire, better kill me than place me in such a position. . . . What will become of me? Where is he, Sire, M. de Lauzun?'

"'Do not be anxious about him: nothing will happen to him.'

"'Ah, Sire, I fear everything for him and for myself since our enemies have prevailed over your kindness for him.'

"'He threw himself on his knees beside me and embraced me. For three-quarters of an hour we embraced, his cheek against mine. He wept as bitterly as I did.

"'Ah; why did you give me time to reflect? Why did you not make haste?'

"'Alas, Sire, who could have distrusted Your Majesty's own word? You have never broken it to any one, and you begin with me and M. de Lauzun! I shall die, and I shall be too happy to die; I love, love passionately and truly, the best man in your kingdom. His elevation was the pleasure and joy of my life. . . . You gave him to me; you take him from me; it is like tearing out my heart. I shall love you no less; but my grief is all the more cruel, being caused by what I love best in all the world.'"

Her tears, prayers, and reproaches were of no avail. Her royal cousin, who had no doubt a certain affection for her and found himself in a painful position, might have disregarded the remonstrances of his wife, his brother, his other Bourbon cousins and the whole House of Lorraine, as well as the foreign opinion he chiefly pleaded; but he could not resist the Marquise de Montespan. In the afternoon of that very day this lady had been advised by a friend—some say, the old Princesse de Carignan; some, her very clever governess, Madame Scarron; perhaps both—that her known friendship with M. de Lauzun would cause the royal family, so strongly prejudiced against the marriage, to lay the blame

of it on her. Further, that royal favour at its best was uncertain, and that the affair might end in ruin for herself. She therefore went to the King, and begged him for his own sake and hers to forbid the marriage. Afterwards, when Lauzun reproached her, she bore his remarks "with admirable patience."

Mademoiselle drove back at full speed to the Luxembourg, in a terrible state of mind. The Abbé de Choisy, who was among those waiting for her return, gives a vivid account of it.

"Two of her footmen entered the room, saying aloud, 'Go out quickly by the staircase!' Everybody crowded out; but I was among the last, and saw the Princess coming along the guard-room like a fury, dishevelled, waving her arms as if to threaten heaven and earth; she had broken the windows of her coach on the way."

The poor woman's grief was too violent and too human to be soothed by formalities and deputations. Lauzun's cool self-command, when he arrived with his friends, by order of the King, to thank her for the honour she had done him, and to assure her of His Majesty's kind consideration for them both, only lacerated her feelings the more. He actually advised her to appear the next day at the royal dinner, and to thank the King for his goodness in forbidding her to do what she would have repented all her life long.

"You are so strong-minded," she sobbed, "that everybody will think you are indifferent to me!"

Everybody did think so, except Mademoiselle herself, and everybody was right. Personally, of course, M. de Lauzun cared nothing for Mademoiselle. For a few days, weeks, months probably, he had fancied himself the richest man in France and lifted by marriage into a higher position than that of any of his fellow-nobles. But the will of Providence or the King—the words were interchangeable under Louis XIV—had at the last moment dashed the cup from his lips. M. de Lauzun was equal to the occasion. He knew that the one present necessity, for him, was to keep

his place in the King's favour, and outwardly, at least, he bore his reverse with manly dignity and resignation. The Abbé de Choisy declares that the King offered to make him a Duke and a Marshal of France, and that he refused both honours. Saint-Simon, who knew Lauzun well in later years, says that he made his sacrifice with a good grace, while Mademoiselle "*jeta feu et flammes.*" Madame de Sévigné, an eye-witness, writing on Christmas Eve, says: "M. de Lauzun has played his part to perfection: he bears his misfortune with a firmness, a courage, and yet a sadness mingled with deep respect, which win everybody's admiration. He has lost what is priceless; but the King's good graces, which he has kept, are priceless too. . . ."

On Friday morning, twenty-four hours after her former visit, Madame de Sévigné was again with Mademoiselle, for whom, unlike the heartless crowd of the Court, she seems to have felt an honest, warm-hearted pity.

"... I found her in her bed; she redoubled her cries when she saw me, she called me to her, she embraced me, bathed me with her tears. She said to me, 'Alas, do you remember what you said to me yesterday? Ah! what cruel prudence! ah, prudence!' Her weeping made me weep too. I have been to her twice since then; she is much afflicted, and always treats me as a person who feels for her grief; she is not mistaken. I have felt, on this occasion, as one seldom does for people of her high rank."

The King's personal consolations, which ought to have been valuable, were characteristically received by Mademoiselle. He came to see her on the day after the catastrophe, and tried to comfort her with caresses, "his cheek against mine." She said to him, "Your Majesty reminds me of those apes which smother their children when they embrace them."

The Queen also came, but could find nothing to say. Monsieur avoided the subject, and talked about perfumes. Among many other visitors, it is displeasing to see the name of Madame de Montespan. Either from ignorance of what

she had done, or from a well-founded respect for her influence, Mademoiselle talked to her as a friend. Madame de la Vallière, whose sympathy was tactless, said stupid things and was dismissed as a fool.

On Christmas Eve, worn and hollow-eyed after living for several days on tears and broth, Mademoiselle reappeared at Court. When the Queen asked her how she did, she replied shortly, "Very well"; but in the presence of the King she found it impossible to control herself, and was obliged to turn aside into a window to hide her tears. Louis spoke to her with friendly sympathy. But his kindness was cruel. She feared that he might forbid her to see M. de Lauzun again. He did nothing of the sort. For his own present peace and her future misery, he was willing that the lost lover should continue to be her best friend.

"Voilà qui est fini. Adieu!" says Madame de Sévigné, having told the romantic story, the beautiful dream, the complete tragedy, of Mademoiselle and M. de Lauzun. Unhappily, the tragedy with all its sordid developments and dreary consequences only ended with Mademoiselle's life.

CHAPTER VIII

1671-1694

"Personne n'a possédé les grandes qualités de son époque à un plus haut degré que cette princesse, et personne ne les avait conservées aussi intactes, sans souci du danger, après qu'elles furent devenues une cause de défaveur. . . . La Grande Mademoiselle fut toujours la Grande Mademoiselle, et, si ce fut quelquefois son défaut, ce fut bien plus souvent son titre de gloire."

THE STORY OF A SECRET MARRIAGE—LAUZUN'S IMPRISONMENT—
MADEMOISELLE'S CONSTANCY—CHOISY—FREEDOM AND DISILLUSION—
THE FINAL QUARREL—LAST DAYS AND DEATH OF MADEMOISELLE

ANGRY Paris began to laugh; appeased by the King's action, it was now keenly sensible of the ridiculous side of the proposed marriage. Society, which had been so ready to pay its compliments at the Luxembourg, laughed too; only a very few kind people felt for Mademoiselle in the downfall of her hopes. The unlucky affair lessened her countrymen's respect for her and destroyed in a great measure her popularity. The French are always impatient of a want of that balance, that sense of proportion in managing one's life, which they generally possess in so high a degree.

After the crisis of December, 1670, Mademoiselle continued to be on the most affectionate terms with M. de Lauzun. She took his advice on all her affairs, dismissed her old servants and changed her confessor to please him, loaded him with presents, bored him with cautions and anxieties: he must beware of the cold and the damp, must take care of his teeth, his eyes, his hair. All this intimacy rather justified the gossips in believing in a secret marriage; of which, it may at once be said, there exists no real proof

whatever. No date, no place, no witnesses ; nothing but guess-work and a certain amount of tradition, handed on from one writer of memoirs or letters to another.

It has been thought that the marriage took place during the early days after the catastrophe, or at least during Lauzun's ten months of freedom in that year 1671. Mademoiselle mentions the gossip of the time, and the way in which she takes it may certainly have two meanings. In April they travelled with the Court into Flanders ; the first stage, by the way, was a visit to the Prince de Condé at Chantilly, and this was the occasion of the famous suicide of Vatel.

"A report was spread that we had been married before leaving Paris, and the *Gazette de Hollande* said so. They brought it, to show it to me. He laughed ; I said nothing. . . . People went on saying we were married. Neither he nor I said anything. Only our particular friends dared speak of it, and we laughed in their faces. . . ."

Her own words, written in 1677, while Lauzun was still pining in his dungeon at Pignerol, seem to make it clear that he was not then her husband. She is writing in her Memoirs of Mazarin's last suggestion that she should marry Charles II, and of the little interest she took in this matter of marriage, owing to her personal indifference to every match that had been proposed to her.

"But that same Providence, which acts in all things, so that a hair does not fall from our heads without God's foreknowledge, did not then decide, and still delays to decide, what should happen to give me a fixed state, in which I could find perfect repose."

Segraï, who knew her well, and did her full justice in spite of his disgrace, never believed in the secret marriage. She was a proud woman, and whatever her weakness for Lauzun, it is difficult to conceive her consenting to the necessary arrangements. The thing would have been impossible, of course, without the King's knowledge and connivance ; but at the best it would have involved subterfuges

and domestic mysteries quite foreign to her frank, autocratic character.

Another proof to the contrary is to be found in her bargaining with Madame de Montespan in 1680 for Lauzun's liberty. She would do anything for the King's children, "if the King would set M. de Lauzun free and consent to my marrying him." One day Madame de Montespan said to her, "You must not flatter yourself; the King will never consent to your marrying M. de Lauzun in the way you wish, nor to his being called M. de Montpensier. But he will make him a Duke; and if you choose to marry, he will pretend to know nothing about it; and if people tell him, he will scold them. Will not that be the same thing?"

Mademoiselle answered, "What, Madame! He will live with me as my husband, without being declared to be such? What will be said and thought of me?"

Madame de Montespan's arguments were amusing, if not convincing. But no one who knows Mademoiselle will believe that she was already familiar with the stolen happiness so attractively set before her.

But this is forestalling the later scenes of the sorry romance.

On the 25th November, 1671, Lauzun was arrested without the slightest warning and carried away to his prison at Pignerol. He had many enemies, but Madame de Montespan was the most powerful. She found him dangerous, for ever since the stopping of the marriage he had not concerned himself, either in private or in public, to hide his opinion of her, and if Segrain is to be believed, she was advised by the far-sighted Madame Scarron to rid herself of him in this effectual way.

So the King's little courtier vanished into the darkness of his state prison, leaving few friends to occupy themselves with his fate, and only one ready to make sacrifices for the sake of his freedom. He vanished at a moment when the Court was thinking of something else, busy with its welcome to Monsieur's new wife, Charlotte-Élisabeth of Bavaria, and

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wondering at the German eccentricity which dressed her in pale blue silk when all France was shivering in furs. For that November was a time of frost and snow, which deepened Mademoiselle's grief in thinking of her lover's journey, to end in the chilly damp of a dungeon.

"It amazes me that I did not die of it," she writes.

But she found good reasons for living, and even for regular attendance at the Court functions to which she was more than indifferent. The King must not be displeased by her absence, or allowed to forget the existence of M. de Lauzun. Every one knew that his affection for him had once been real; it might be revived through pity for his present state; and Mademoiselle did not now blame the King, knowing that Lauzun's disgrace was the work of his personal enemies.

It is impossible not to admire the steady constancy of her life during those ten years. She would willingly have given way to a grief deepened and justified by news that reached her now and then of Lauzun's sufferings, his failing health, a futile attempt at escape which only ended in more severe captivity. But there were other things to be done for his sake.

"The same sense of duty," she writes, "which might have kept me at home to lament him, to weep for him, to talk of him with his friends, to attend churches, to kneel before the Crucifix praying God for patience, so necessary for both him and me for the right bearing of our cross, has led me to take all the steps I have taken, hardly natural in a person whose heart is pierced, like mine, with tender sorrow."

So Mademoiselle, the King's old cousin, sturdily kept her conspicuous place at Court, never giving up hope of Lauzun's liberty and her own future happiness, while joining with a sad heart in all the amusements and all the troubles of the royal family. She knew that there was no real reason, beyond private revenge and spite, why the imprisonment should linger on from one year to another. The King himself told the Duke of Buckingham, who ventured to intercede for him, that Lauzun was not lost for ever. It was generally

said that a severe lesson was needed by the proud and ambitious little man, who had made the mistake of being too popular with the troops and thus giving Louvois, always his enemy, an excuse for distrusting him. But no treasonable action or intention could be proved against Lauzun, and in the end the same person who really caused his arrest was the means of his being set free. The affair in all its stages was a triumph for Madame de Montespan.

During these years Mademoiselle occupied herself much with her estates, which she hoped Lauzun might one day enjoy ; and with the help of her friend the Abbé de Rancé, now the saintly Abbot of La Trappe, she founded various charitable institutions, schools and hospitals, particularly at Eu, where she spent most of her time when not at Versailles or the Luxembourg.

Rancé was a man of sense, as well as of devotion. When they renewed their friendship in 1676, she was in very low spirits and constantly visiting her neighbours at the Carmelite Convent, where her beloved Mademoiselle d'Épernon (Sœur Anne-Marie), was what she always remained, one of the humblest of the nuns. Mademoiselle du Vigean was dead ; it was a year since Louise de la Vallière had taken the veil. People expected that the Abbé de Rancé would influence Mademoiselle to end her troubles by following all these familiar examples. But, says she, "he was clever enough to know that persons of my quality can do more good in the world than by leaving it, and that they save themselves in saving others, when they know how to make use of their quality by giving a good example and by helping the widow and the orphan with their purse and their protection."

Acting on this doctrine, Mademoiselle made her philanthropic foundations, placed them under the care of Sisters of Charity, and for the rest of her life was earnestly and practically interested in their working and administration.

It was also during these years that Mademoiselle, always planning a happy future, bought a tract of woodland over-

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looking the Seine at Choisy, and built for herself what she had long desired, a country house near Paris. She first thought of employing Le Nôtre, but as he ventured, in talking to the King, to criticise the situation she had chosen, he with his plans was promptly "planté là," and Gabriel, a more submissive architect, built the house according to her fancy. The arranging of her lawns, woods, and terraces, kitchen-garden and orangery, the decoration of rooms and galleries, the collection of portraits, especially those of the King—"the finest ornament of all, the most honourable, and the dearest to me"—with the lovely view from windows commanding not only a part of Paris and passing boats on the Seine, but the forest of Senart and the wide plain scattered with villages and bounded by distant hills; all this gave Mademoiselle some of her latest happy hours. A few months, and the ungrateful, ill-conditioned Lauzun was growling over the money she had spent on Choisy, and frankly saying, "You would have done better to give it to me."

The generous, constant creature had given him all she could. With the understanding that he was to be set at liberty, she had settled a large part of her estates and fortune, including Eu and Dombes, on the Duc du Maine, son of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan. This lady managed the affair odiously well, leading Mademoiselle at first to believe that the King would consent to her marriage, and actually causing M. de Lauzun to be brought from Pignerol to the Baths of Bourbon, that she might extract from him a renunciation of Mademoiselle's gifts. At first the prisoner refused, and went back to his dungeon, but in the end he was forced to yield. Mademoiselle did her best, then and later, to compensate him with Saint-Fargeau and other property.

Though Lauzun was set at liberty, it was long before he was allowed to return to the Court. As for Mademoiselle, ready with welcome and forgiveness in spite of many scandalous stories which had reached her during those ten years, disillusion and disgust were her portion.



LOUIS XIV

It was not extraordinary. It takes a fine nature to pass through a long, unhealthy captivity without bodily and mental deterioration. Lauzun was neither strong in body nor noble in mind. His good qualities, except as a soldier, were skin-deep. He came back greedy, worldly, selfish as ever, horribly ungrateful to the Princess who had been so true to him. A born courtier, miserable away from the King, he actually reproached Mademoiselle with having mismanaged his affairs and delayed his freedom by her interference. They were on the strangest terms, for although he spent his time in low pleasures and gambling, he looked to her for supplies and indulgences of every kind—money, fine lodgings, horses and carriages—and expected, as before, to have the whole management of her affairs. This she very decidedly would not give him; but yet, though constantly offended and hurt by his ingratitude and other sins, she bore with him patiently for three years.

If they were married secretly, as some people think, soon after his return from Pignerol, it yet seems impossible to fix the time, or to ignore the improbabilities. Evidently he had still a considerable charm for her, but it hardly lasted for two years after his reappearance. Writing in 1690, three years before her death, of the winter of 1682–3, she says: "I spent the winter as usual, in going and coming between Paris and Versailles. M. de Lauzun visited me every evening at the hour of play; his changeable humours continued. I was beginning to know him, and to be tired of him; but I wished to carry out the bargain, and I was unwilling, after having done so much for him, to forsake him before reaching the desired end; which was, to have him made a duke and restored to the Court."

Is this a woman writing of her husband? One can hardly believe it; and yet the tradition of the marriage lives, and will continue to live, as well as the various stories connected with it.

In any case, as Sainte-Beuve says, married or not, Mademoiselle bore "the slow suffering which wears out love in a

heart, the scorn and anger which break it, and she reached that final indifference which knows no remedy or consolation except in God. It is a sad day, the day when one discovers that the person one loved to deck with all perfections and to load with all gifts was after all *si peu de chose*."

Before the final quarrel in the spring of 1684 there were curious scenes of rage and reconciliation at the Château d'Eu.

M. de Lauzun, in his visits to Mademoiselle, scandalised the neighbourhood with vicious courses which were reported in her ears and cost him blows and scratches from his incensed patroness—wife, possibly—for these stories are the strongest existing evidence of a marriage. On one occasion she was so angry that she turned him out of doors. Saint-Simon tells the story on the authority of a virtuous witness, Madame de Fontenilles, who was present at the scene in the long gallery at Eu, when Madame de Fiesque had patched up a temporary peace.

"Mademoiselle appeared at the end of the gallery ; he was at the other end, and he traversed the whole length on his knees as far as Mademoiselle's feet."

Saint-Simon goes on to say: "These scenes, more or less violent, often recurred afterwards. He got tired of being beaten, and in his turn soundly beat Mademoiselle, and this happened several times, so that at last, weary of each other, they quarrelled once for all and never saw each other again."

The final separation took place on April 22nd, 1684. M. de Lauzun, in a terrible humour, came to see Mademoiselle at the Luxembourg ; the King was starting to join his army on the frontier, and the daring little officer of former days was left behind. Mademoiselle, laughing at his gloomy airs, advised him to leave Paris for one of his estates.

"It is ridiculous to stay here," she said, "and I should be very sorry if any one thought I was the cause of your staying."

Lauzun replied, "I am going, and I bid you farewell, never in my life to see you again."

"Life would have been very happy," she retorted, "if I had never seen you ; but better late than never."

"You have ruined my fortune," he answered ; "you have cut my throat ; you are the cause that I am not going with the King ; it is at your request."

"Oh ! as to that, it is false," said Mademoiselle ; "he can tell you so himself."

He flew into a rage, but she remained cool. At last she said, "Adieu then !" and left the room. Returning after some time, she found him still there with her ladies, waiting for the usual evening games. She went up to him and said, "This is too much ; keep your resolution ; begone."

He went, carrying his complaints straight to Monsieur, and letting all Paris know that he had been "*chassé comme un coquin*."

He did not gain much sympathy from Monsieur, always friendly with Mademoiselle. Several years later, at Lauzun's request, Monsieur interceded for him with his cousin. The Marquis de Dangeau tells the result.

"Mademoiselle replied to Monsieur that M. de Lauzun was an ungrateful man, that she would not see him, that she would give everything in the world never to have seen him. Monsieur highly approved of Mademoiselle's answer."

In fact, they never met again. He wrote to her ; she burned his letters unread. When she was ill he came constantly to inquire for her, but was never admitted ; even on her death-bed she angrily refused to see him. After he had recovered his master's favour by the successful adventure in England which ended in his rescuing the wife and son of James II, and by which he attained fresh fame, the Order of the Garter, and finally the long-desired dukedom, he sent to Choisy a fine collection of Chinese curiosities bought in England. Mademoiselle would not receive them, though, like herself, she could not resist going to look at them and admiring their quaint beauty.

She drifted on into a melancholy old age, surviving most of her cousins and friends, her allies in the days of the Fronde.

Among the changes of her later years, the chief one was that brought about by the death of the Queen, whom she regretted sincerely. "I liked that poor woman," she says, writing of the heartless funeral ceremonies, the laughter in the mourning coaches, the scandalous behaviour of the escort, scattered hunting over the plain of St. Denis. Even Madame de Montespan was shocked. She had put the finishing touch to the martyrdom of Marie-Thérèse by devoted attention during her few days' illness. To her, indeed, the Queen's death was no advantage, for it meant the raising of her parasite and rival to a place quite out of her own reach. The marvellous cleverness, the supreme good sense, of Madame de Maintenon, gained an easy victory over the stateliest beauty, the most agreeable charm, the most real genius for magnificence, that the Court of France ever knew. Mademoiselle had reason enough to complain of Madame de Montespan, but she always found her irresistible. The succeeding reign of veiled ambition and hypocrisy had no attraction for a woman of Mademoiselle's character.

When, in the spring of 1693, she lay dying at the Luxembourg, Paris remembered its old affection for the Princess who had never deserted its cause, and had not forsaken the capital of France, like the King, who could not forgive past rebellion in man, woman, or city, for a great extravagant palace outside the walls. Mademoiselle was always Parisian at heart. The same bells which had welcomed her birth now chimed for her passing. She died on Sunday, April 5th, within a few weeks of her sixty-sixth birthday; hurried out of life by the strong remedies of ignorant doctors, like so many people of her time.

By her will, dated in 1685, Mademoiselle left large legacies to different charitable works, and also to all her servants "to keep them from dying of hunger like those of certain great princesses, whom she had seen in that sad condition." She left Choisy to the Dauphin, and she appointed Monsieur, her cousin and friend, her residuary legatee. The largest portion of her property was already settled on the Duc du Maine.

In this will M. de Lauzun was not mentioned. An earlier one, however, still existed, sealed with Mademoiselle's six seals; this was brought to the King by Lauzun two days after her death, and was officially opened by the first President of the Parliament of Paris. It made Lauzun her sole heir. Being superseded, however, the only effect of this precious document was to irritate the King and his brother against M. de Lauzun. And he did himself no good by appearing at Court in the deepest mourning, with his servants in a new livery of black and silver.

La Grande Mademoiselle was sincerely missed and respectfully mourned, even by the people who had scoffed at her mistakes and eccentricities. Always herself, always natural and human, she was one of the last links between the magnificent, formal, famine-stricken France of Louis XIV and Madame de Maintenon, where society had become a mere mirror to reflect the King, and the old world gradually subdued by Richelieu and Mazarin, the world of adventure, of fun and fighting, of individual, independent romance.

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